

# WILD WEST



A MAGAZINE CONTAINING STORIES, SKETCHES Etc. OF WESTERN LIFE.

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NEW YORK, OCTOBER 20, 1905.

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## YOUNG WILD WEST AND THE ARIZONA ATHLETE; OR, A DUEL THAT LASTED A WEEK.

*By AN OLD SCOUT.*



At the word the two grappled. The Arizona athlete was a powerful young fellow, but Wild did not fear the outcome. The dashing young deadshot had no trouble in getting the hold he wanted and gathered his muscles.



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## Young Wild West and the Arizona Athlete

OR,

### A Duel That Lasted a Week.

By **AN OLD SCOUT**

#### CHAPTER I.

##### YOUNG WILD WEST MEETS THE ARIZONA ATHLETE.

Camped on the banks of the Colorado River, with Echo Peak looming up before them, with an almost arid desert intervening, were three Americans of a rather dashing appearance.

It was a fine morning in August and the thick growth of mesquite which spread out on the gentle slope near the bank of the stream sparkled with dewdrops as the face of Old Sol showed above the distant peak.

A man of perhaps thirty and two young fellows of twenty composed the trio, and by their general appearance they were persons who were used to roughing it in the mountains.

One of the young fellows was bound to attract the attention of the casual observer, since he was what might be called a boy with the form and grace of an Apollo, handsome and fearless in looks and springy and active in his movements.

He was of medium height and had a mass of chestnut hair hanging over his shoulders which was combed out as neatly as the tresses of any young lady of particular habits.

His supple form was encased in a suit of wearing apparel that consisted of a blue silk shirt, buckskin breeches, riding boots and a sombrero of a pearl-gray color.

About his waist was a belt which contained a brace of Colt's revolvers and a hunting-knife, in addition to the row of rifle cartridges that went nearly all the way around.

His companions were attired and armed in a similar style.

The boy was about his age, but did not have long hair.

The man was slightly over six feet, rather slim, but as muscular as a panther, and with his long, dark hair and flowing mustache he showed up to great advantage.

This trio was pretty well known throughout the great wild West.

It was composed of Young Wild West, the Prince of the Saddle and Champion Deadshot of the West: Cheyenne Charlie, the ex-government scout and Indian fighter, and Jim Dart, a boy who had been born and reared on the border.

For coolness and daring the equal of Young Wild West had never been found, and his two partners had learned much from him in that particular line.

Added to his coolness and daring, the dashing boy with the long chestnut hair could shoot as quick as a flash, and when he pulled a trigger the bullet always hit where he intended it to.

His keen range of vision and steady nerves gave him the ability to hit a bulls-eye as far as a rifle would carry, and against all comers he held the title of the champion deadshot.

But these were not the only qualifications the boy had! If he was good at defending himself with a rifle or revolver he was more so with the weapons nature had provided him with.

And his wonderful tact and judgment had carried him successfully through many a tight place.

There was nothing in the way of athletics that he had ever seen practiced that he could not hold his own at, for his marvelous strength, combined with his quickness, good judgment and extreme coolness at all times, no matter what the circumstances might be, had lent to him a power that few mortals were possessed of.

As we find Young Wild West and his two partners,



Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart, on this bright summer morning they are getting ready to move along the trail to Kanab, a town just over the border line of Arizona in Utah.

The dashing young scout and his partners frequently did work for the government, and they were now headed for the border of the Mormon state to join a force of cavalry there and help quell an uprising of the Moqui Indians, a band of about five hundred having left the reservation and struck out on their own hook in a northwesterly direction.

Our hero and his partners were in the southwestern part of Colorado looking over some mining property at the time they were called upon by the commander of the troops, and as they were always looking for excitement and adventure, they promptly accepted the call and set out to meet the soldiers.

Of course they had an idea that they would meet some of the rebellious redskins before they found the bluecoats, but that was nothing to them.

They were used to meeting Indians, and what they could not do with them either in fighting or peacemaking no other ten men could do.

"Well, boys," remarked the dashing young Prince of the Saddle, as he walked over to his handsome sorrel stallion Spitfire and proceeded to saddle him, "I guess we'll be off. It is going to be another scorcher to-day, but since we are pretty well used to the hot weather by this time, I don't know as we will mind it much. We have got a strip of desert to cross that is about thirty miles in width, and if we get to it about four o'clock the sun will be low enough for us to make the attempt. Going to take the haunch of the black bear you shot last night along, Charlie?"

"Yes, Wild," answered the scout. "It might be that I won't git another shot at a bear for awhile. If anything I do like it is a nice juicy steak from a young bear, like this feller was."

"All right. But I guess we'll find plenty of game before we get to the alkali strip, and after we cross it, too. We've got plenty of salt and some bacon and cornmeal, so I guess we won't starve."

"We never have yet, anyhow," spoke up Jim Dart, with a smile.

In a few minutes the three had their horses saddled and bridled.

Charlie owned a fine bay and Jim rode a black.

They were both swift horses, with remarkable endurance, but neither could come up to the sorrel stallion.

He was the swiftest and most intelligent steed they had ever seen.

Young Wild West had broken and trained him some time before, after Cheyenne Charlie had declared that no man alive could ride the "critter" a hundred yards.

Skill and determination will accomplish anything that is possible, and hence Wild had tamed the stallion and made a dumb friend that had proven to be worth his weight in gold.

With their rather meagre equipments tied to their saddle-bags the three started off along the trail, which now left the river and proceeded through a sparsely wooded country.

Kanab was just about sixty miles in a straight line from the spot where they had been camped over night, but as they could not travel in anything like a straight line they did not anticipate reaching it until long after darkness set in.

With the rolling hills of gray and yellow before them they rode along at a good pace until nearly noon.

Then they suddenly came upon the remains of a big campfire.

The bones and offal of a deer were scattered near by and the prints of moccasined feet were much in evidence in the sand.

"Injuns!" exclaimed Cheyenne Charlie, nodding and smiling grimly.

"Yes, Charlie," replied Young Wild West. "It seems that we have come across some of the redskins. They have been having a feast, too, by the appearance of things."

Then all three dismounted and began to look around the vicinity.

Trained as they were to woodcraft, they were not long in arriving at the conclusion that there were as many as a dozen in the party.

The trail the redskins had made came from the south and it continued over the one our friends were following.

"They are headin' straight fur Kanab, I reckon," said the scout. "Must be that ther whole gang is putty close around there."

"Well, I guess we won't change our course until we have to," answered Wild. "Come on, boys!"

They had no desire to halt in the vicinity of the deserted Indian camp.

Some other place would suit them better.

It was just noon when they halted and dismounted in a shady spot and turned the horses loose to feed on the sparse grass and other vegetation that grew there.

Fodder for the steeds was not nearly abundant here as along the banks of the Colorado.

Jim Dart soon had a fire started and Charlie got some slices of the bear meat ready to broil.

A coffee-pot holding just enough for the three of them was hung over the fire and then Dart proceeded to mold three meal cakes, which he wrapped in some leaves and placed in the coals when the blaze had subsided.

This was all they intended to have for their dinner, but it was quite good enough for healthy, hungry mortals like they were.

In less than half an hour from the time the fire was started they were ready to eat their noonday meal.

Their water bottles had been filled at the river, so they would not go thirsty while crossing the arid strip.

They were in hopes of finding a stream before they reached it so the horses could fill up.



Just as the meal was over our three friends were startled by the tooting of a horn.

It sounded strangely out of place in that wild region, and they looked at each other in surprise.

"What in thunder is that?" cried Cheyenne Charlie. "Sounds like a bugle what's got ther croup or somethin' like that."

Toot—toot!

Again the horn sounded.

It was not far away, either, and with the agility of a squirrel Wild began climbing a tree.

He had not reached the top when he caught sight of a stagecoach drawn by six horses coming up a canyon a quarter of a mile away.

With the outfit were about twenty cowboys, evidently for the purpose of guarding it.

Wild took a quick look and then hurriedly descended the tree.

"What is it, Wild?" asked Jim.

"A stagecoach with six horses to it is coming with a crowd of cowboys," was the reply. "Judging by the way the outfit looks, I guess the stagecoach has got a party of tourists in it."

"Humph!" exclaimed the scout. "If they happen to run ag'in them Moquis which is on ther warpath they'll have somethin' to talk about when they git back where they come from."

"Yes, if they got among the whole gang that has left the reservation. But they have got a good force with them—about twenty, I should say."

"Well, twenty cowpunchers ain't goin' to do much ag'in a hundred or so redskins. Ther majority of sich fellers look out for number one every time. They're paid good to go along with the outfit, I reckon, but when it comes to a good stiff scrimmage ther most of 'em ain't goin' to take very big chances."

"Well, just get your horses ready, boys, and we'll ride down and meet them. I had no idea that we were so close to the canyon."

In a couple of minutes they had gathered up everything and mounted.

Then with our hero in the lead they made for a spot where they knew they would intercept the stagecoach.

The horn kept on tooting, and as they neared the approaching party they could hear cheers.

"They are having a good time whoever they are," remarked Jim Dart.

One minute later they were descending into the canyon, and the next the whole outfit came in view.

Half a dozen cowboys were riding in advance, and they caught sight of our friends almost as soon as they were observed themselves.

"Whoop! Whoop!" they yelled, making the canyon echo with their shouts.

Toot! Toot!

The horn joined in the noise and then the party slowed down and came to a halt.

Our friends rode down and halted before the stagecoach.

"Hello?" exclaimed a stocky-built young man, jumping out and looking at them keenly. "You are not highway-men, are you?"

"I guess not," answered Wild. "We are simply travelers, like yourselves."

"Travelers, eh? Well, we ain't no travelers, are we, boys?" and the speaker turned to the cowboys with a laugh.

"Not much!" came the unanimous retort.

Our friends saw that there was no one else in the vehicle, though it was littered with various articles of a sporting nature.

Dumb-bells, Indian clubs, boxing gloves and other similar things could be seen through the open door.

"I'm ther Arizona Athlete," said the young man, folding his arms across his broad chest and looking at Wild and his companions with an air of importance.

## CHAPTER II.

### AN INTERRUPTED FIST FIGHT.

"So you are the Arizona Athlete, eh?" said Young Wild West, quietly. "Riding up this way for your health, I suppose?"

"No; my health is perfect. I just took a notion to make a trip up this way and see how things looked in the mountains. We've come all the way from Prescott, too. I found out just a month ago that I could lick anything that ever walked on two legs with a gun, knife or fists, so I sold out my gold mine and hired a trainer. He taught me a whole lot, but I threw him so hard in a wrestling bout the other day that three of his ribs got broken and he quit me. I am an athlete of the natural sort, so ther doctors in Prescott say. I've got plenty of money, too, and that's why I took a notion to make a trip in this style. Why! I won ten thousand dollars down in Prescott just from meeting and vanquishing men who thought they were good at athletics. It's something new out here in Arizona, but the boys all like my way, don't you, boys?"

An approving shout went up.

"Who are you, young fellow?" the Arizona Athlete asked, changing his boasting way to one of inquisitiveness.

"I go by the name of Young Wild West," and Wild dismounted.

"Oh, you do, eh? Well, you're young enough, I guess, but how about your wildness?"

"Oh, I guess I am not very wild," was the laughing retort.

"Well, get in the coach with me and ride a mile or two. I am not in the habit of inviting anyone to ride with me, either, so you can consider yourself highly honored. I'll open a bottle of imported wine, too!"



"Don't trouble yourself. I never drink it. And as to riding in the coach with you, I must decline the invitation. We are on our way to Kanab, and we want to get there as early as possible to-night."

"What! Won't accept my invitation to get in the coach and ride with me?" roared the young man. "Do you hear that, boys? What had I ought to do with him?"

"Spank him!" suggested a beetle-browed fellow, conspicuous in a yellow shirt.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the Arizona Athlete. "Jumping Joe, you are a good adviser, I must say! You beat me in a broad jump, and I have great respect for you since that. I will take your advice. I will spank this fellow who calls himself Young Wild West!"

Wild saw there was trouble brewing.

But it was not his fault.

He had looked the cowboys over, and the conclusion he came to was that they were a reckless lot, who thought more about drinking and carousing than they did of working on the range.

It was evident that they were having a high old time with the Arizona Athlete, as the young man called himself, and that they would stick right to him in case he was getting the worst of it in a fight.

But that made not a particle of difference to Young Wild West.

If there had been a regiment of soldiers there, and he knew they were all opposed to him, he would not suffer himself to be spanked.

Cheyenne Charlie glared at the young man angrily.

Charlie could not hold his temper like Wild could.

But he seldom let it get the best of him without Wild let him have his way.

The boy now nodded for him to keep cool.

"You are not going to hurt me, are you, Mr. Arizona Athlete?" he asked, smiling at the bragging young man.

"No, I won't hurt you," was the reply. "I will just show you how easy I can handle such fellows as you. Now, here you go upside down with care!"

He reached for Wild, but the boy sidestepped quickly and his fingers simply clutched the empty air.

"Pretty soon on your feet, ain't you?" said the athlete.

"See here!" exclaimed Wild, looking at him with no small degree of earnestness. "I advise you to let me alone."

"You do, eh? Well, I don't listen to advice from coyote puppies like you!"

That was enough!

Young Wild West had been insulted, and he always resented an insult.

Regardless of the fact that the fellow had said he had whipped all comers in Prescott, he shot out his right fist and caught him full on the chin.

The Arizona athlete took a sudden step backward, but caught his foot against a stone and fell over backward.

"Now, then, if you don't behave yourself I'll give you a thrashing!" exclaimed the young deadshot, calmly.

A low murmur of astonishment went up from the mounted men.

"An' ter see Gus Gilpin knocked down as easy as that!" cried the beetle-browed man called Jumping Joe. "What do yer think of it?"

He placed his hand on the butt of a revolver.

"Jest take your hand off that shooter, you homely galoot!" cried Cheyenne Charlie.

It was his cue to speak now, and he knew it.

"Are yer talkin' ter me?" asked the cowboy in surprise.

"I reckon I am."

"Take it easy, Charlie," cautioned Wild. "I am going to thrash the Arizona Athlete, I guess. Don't you interfere unless someone else tries to take a chance at the game."

"This galoot was goin' to shoot, I reckon," replied the scout.

"Oh! Well, if anyone tries that just drop them, that's all. We are not picking a quarrel, and if that is what they want let them get it!"

This remark in such a calm and easy tone of voice astonished the crowd more than ever.

The Arizona Athlete was now on his feet again.

"I had no idea that you would hit me, Young Wild West," he said, showing little or no sign of anger. "You can't do it again!"

"Well, it might be that I can't, but I will try if you give me cause to," was the reply, while Wild stood on the defensive with flashing eyes.

"Go ahead an' knock him down, Gus!" called out the beetle-browed feller. "Then yer kin spank him good."

"Maybe you think you can do that; so after I get through with this bluffer I'll let you try," the boy remarked, flashing a look at the cowboy.

"I reckon there won't be enough left of yer ter tackle me when Gus Gilpin gits done with yer!" and Jumping Joe laughed.

The athlete now began doing some cautious sparring. He danced around Wild like a jack-in-the-box, but did not come close enough to hit him.

He was trying to bewilder the boy by his fancy manoeuvres, but that was something he could not do.

The eyes of the young deadshot were watching him as a cat watches a mouse.

It was a case of fight, and no mistake, so Young Wild West brought all his tact and judgment into play.

The young man before him claimed to be a natural-born athlete, helped along by training.

If that was the case he was up against a tough proposition.

"What are you doing?" he calmly asked. "I don't want you to show me how you can dance; go ahead and knock me down."

That was just enough to make the athlete do something.



He stepped forward, made a feint with his left and then let go a straight right for Wild's head.

Spat!

It was not his blow that made the sound.

That only clove the empty air.

Wild saw his chance and uppercut him on the chin.

The Arizona Athlete spat blood, showing that he had bitten his tongue, and then losing all his caution and his temper at the same time he rushed into the fray.

Nothing could have suited Young Wild West any better.

He was more than active enough to dodge the furious onslaught of his enraged antagonist, and he did it with a coolness and skill that made the eyes of the cowboy band open with wonder.

Biff!

Wild landed one on the breast of his opponent and sent him staggering.

Following up his advantage, he tried for a right swing on the jaw.

But the athlete neatly dodged this and countered, fetching our hero a good one on the shoulder that sent him back a couple of steps.

It was the first blow the Arizona Athlete had landed, and his friends gave a cheer to encourage him on.

"Take it easy, Wild," Jim Dart cautioned.

But Wild did not need to be told what to do.

He realized that he had a tough man to fight, and he was on the alert all the while.

Gilpin, as the cowboys called the athlete, had calmed a little and he became more cautious again.

But he evidently made up his mind to rush the boy and get it over with as soon as possible.

For the next ten seconds some very pretty sparring took place.

Gilpin knew how to do this to perfection.

Wild simply acted on the defensive, waiting to get in a blow that would settle his man.

A left jab on the chin was received by our hero, but the right swing that was aimed for his head was cleverly dodged.

Then he succeeded in landing one right between the eyes of the athlete.

It was a heavy blow, and in spite of anything he could do, Gilpin went to the earth.

One of his men ran over to pick him up.

But this was not necessary.

He was up in a twinkling without any help.

The young man was possessed of great stamina, and his grit could not be questioned.

He sailed into the fight just as though nothing had happened.

"Give him one on his Adam's apple, Wild!" cried Charlie. "That will fetch ther galoot, I reckon."

"There ain't no man livin' what kin lick ther Arizona Athlete!" answered Jumping Joe. "Jest because he got

a little ther worst of it at ther start don't say that he's goin' ter be licked. Jest you wait!"

Blows were struck by both now, but with little damage being done.

The Arizona Athlete looked worried.

He had found his match, and he knew it.

Just what the outcome would have been is hard to tell, for the fight was suddenly stopped.

The clatter of hoofs, followed by the scream of a female in distress, rang out with startling distinctness.

Then the warwhoop of a band of Indians reverberated through the narrow confines of the little canyon.

The Arizona Athlete made a leap for the stagecoach and grabbed a rifle, while Wild stepped back and took the rifle Jim Dart had been holding for him.

The next instant four foaming horses dashed around a turn and came in view.

Mounted on them were three men and a girl of probably seventeen.

It was the latter who had uttered the scream, beyond the shadow of a doubt.

A shout of joy went up from the three men when they saw the band of cowboys and the stagecoach.

And then in hot pursuit came a score of painted Indians.

"That's ther gang what was camped above here, Wild," said Charlie.

"I guess so," was the reply.

Then leaping upon the back of the sorrel, the brave young Prince of the Saddle dashed forward to meet the redskins.

But the Indians were not going to dash straight into that band of white men that they had come upon so unexpectedly.

They brought their ponies to with a jerk and turned to flee.

Wild did not fire at them.

He held his rifle in readiness to do so, however, in case they showed fight.

He rode right on after them, for it struck him that they would probably get around in the bend and lie in ambush for the stagecoach and party of cowboys.

He was right in this, for they no sooner got out of sight of the party than they came to a halt and drew back into a group of trees.

Wild swung around and rode back without being seen by the red demons.

Charlie and Jim met him halfway to the stagecoach.

"Have they gone?" the scout asked.

"Not far," was the reply. "They are hiding around the bend, evidently for the purpose of attacking the men when they go past."

They rode back and found the four fugitives had dismounted near the stagecoach.

Gus Gilpin, the so-called Arizona Athlete, was talking to them.

Wild and his partners got there in time to learn that



the four were Josh Dimple, a hunter and trapper, and his son and daughter, Jack and Katy; and also a young man named Ned Nelson, who was engaged in the same business and who evidently was the girl's lover.

"You folks ought to be very glad that we happened to be here," said Gilpin, puffing out his chest in an important way.

"We are," replied the elder of the men. "If you folks hadn't been here and he," pointing at Wild, "hadn't started after ther red galoots, we'd have got it bad! We didn't know ther Moquis were on ther warpath away up this here way."

"Where are you bound?" Wild asked.

"We was headin' fur Kanab when ther redskins met us, an' we had ter turn an' come this way," answered Ned Nelson, who was now quite close to the young lady, who, since her fright was over, was smiling complacently.

She was a very pretty girl, and evidently one who had been born and brought up on the frontier.

"Did yer drop any of ther measly coyotes?" Cheyenne Charlie queried.

"No," replied the older man. "They didn't offer ter shoot at us, so we didn't fire. They 'peared as though they wanted ter take us prisoners, ther red scoundrels!"

"Boys, is Kanab the nearest town?" asked the Arizona Athlete.

"Yes!" answered several of his men at the same time.

"Good! Then we'll go to Kanab. The young lady can get in the coach and ride with me."

Katy Dimple looked into the vehicle and then shook her head.

"I'd rather stay in the saddle," she said.

"But I insist that you ride in here. It will be safer."

"You can insist all you want to, stranger. I ain't going to ride in that rig. My horse is good enough for me."

That the girl had a mind of her own was quite certain.

Charlie grinned when he saw the look of disappointment that crept over the athlete's face.

"He wanted to git a chance to flirt with ther gal, I reckon," he remarked to Wild and Jim.

They nodded.

"Well, I guess we'll go on," said Gilpin. "Go ahead, driver! Young Wild West, I will meet you later."

"See here!" exclaimed our hero. "If you go on around that turn you will fall into an ambush. The Moquis are hiding there waiting for you."

"Nonsense! The redskins got so frightened when they saw this crowd that they won't stop till their horses give out. Ambush, eh? Nonsense!"

"All right, then, go ahead and take your medicine, then."

Wild was disgusted with the young man, anyhow, and he was sorry the fight had been stopped so suddenly.

The driver of the stagecoach cracked his long whip and the six horses started up the canyon.

The mounted cowboys went ahead at the same time, but

the four who had escaped from the band of Indians remained with our friends.

With a clatter and loud tooting of the horn by the Arizona Athlete the outfit swept on and rounded the bend.

Two minutes later the rattle and bang of firearms was heard!

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE DUEL BEGINS.

"Now I guess they know!" exclaimed Young Wild West, a smile flitting over his handsome face. "The Arizona Athlete seemed to know it all, so I did not insist on their keeping away from the ambush. But we'll go and help them out, boys! It is not our way to sit idly by and let a band of savage redskins wipe out people of our own race. Come on!"

The next instant our three friends galloped toward the scene of the fight that was taking place.

As they rounded the curve they came upon an inspiring scene.

Three of the six horses that had been hitched to the stagecoach were dead on the ground and the vehicle was at a standstill, almost turned over against a big rock.

The cowboys had taken to the rocks at the side of the trail and were exchanging shots with the redskins in the little clump of trees on the other side.

Crack! Crack! Crac-crack-crack! Crac-c-c-ck!

Revolvers and rifles were popping away from both sides, while the fierce yells of the Indians added to the din.

Young Wild West and his partners quickly dismounted.

Then they began firing at the redskins.

They got behind a convenient bunch of rocks, so as to not needlessly expose themselves, and as they could see the flitting forms of the copper-hued fiends, they made every shot tell.

This put a new phase on the fight.

The cowboys had been doing very little damage to the Moqui warriors, but when Wild and his partners took a hand in the game things were different.

At every crack an Indian fell.

Fifty such deadshots as Young Wild West would have soon broken the rebellion and sent the surviving Moquis back to the reservation like whipped curs.

They made every shot tell—Wild, Charlie and Jim, we mean—and that was something that soon discouraged a foe.

Bullets that merely sing about the heads of redskins and do no damage only serve to spur them on.

Young Wild West and his two partners had only fired three shots apiece when the redskins concluded it was too hot for them there.

They drew back in a hurry, and, mounting their horses, rode away up a ravine.



"I guess that settles that gang, anyhow," our hero remarked, as he mounted his horse and started for the stage-coach that looked ludicrous in the half-capsized position it was in.

The smoke of the battle was clearing away now, and, realizing that their red foes had been put to flight by Young Wild West and his pards, the cowboys came from behind the rocks.

"I told you what you would get," said Wild, looking at Jumping Joe, the beetle-browed man, who was evidently the leader of the men.

"Well, I sorter reckoned so myself," was the sheepish reply; "but Gus said as how we should go ahead, an' we didn't want ter go ag'in him."

"Where is Gus, as you call him?"

"In ther coach, I reckon. I didn't see him git out. He didn't have time ter git out! Like as not he's dead—rid-dled with them Injuns' bullets."

Wild rode over to the coach.

He had no sooner got there than a head appeared.

"Have they gone, boys?" asked a voice which belonged to the Arizona Athlete. "Ginger! But things were pretty hot, I should say! The bullets were playing a tune in my ears, and it is a miracle that I wasn't hit."

He crawled out and dropped to the ground.

Then his eyes fell upon our hero.

"So you have shown up again, Young Wild West?" he queried, his brow darkening.

"You should be very thankful that I have," was the calm rejoinder.

"Why?"

"Ask your men."

"What does he mean, boys?" and the athlete cast an inquiring look at his followers.

"Well, I reckon if him an' his pards hadn't come up an' opened fire on ther redskins with their rifles things would have been mighty different about now," Jumping Jack said, shaking his head impressively.

"Is that so?"

"That's so, young man!" exclaimed Josh Dimple, the hunter, who rode up just then, followed by his son and daughter and Ned Nelson. "Why, I never seen sich shootin' in my life! I reckon if yer look in that woods over there you'll find some dead Injuns. I watched an' counted ther shots Young Wild West an' his pards let go inter 'em. They fired jest three times apiece, an' every time a rifle went off a redskin dropped. That was what made 'em light out fur ther ravine. From where they was hidin' your fellers couldn' do 'em no damage, an' they'd have kept on leadin' your fire till they got a chance ter clean yer up. Young Wild West an' his pards sartinly saved yer, an' no mistake!"

"Humph!"

The Arizona Athlete did not appear to be very much pleased.

"What's the damage, Joe?" he asked.

"Tom, ther driver, went under, an' three of ther horses is shot," was the reply.

"That is too bad. I never had any idea that we would be interfered with by any Indians. I didn't think there were any bad ones around this part of the country, in fact."

"Well, I heerd ther other day that a lot of Moquis had left ther reservation, but I didn't know where they headed fur," answered Jumping Joe.

"Well, let's see if we can't right up things. Since Kanab is the nearest town, we had better make for it in a hurry."

"We've got a thirty-mile strip of alkali dust ter git over afore we reach it, too."

"Then the sooner we get off the better."

The cowboys set themselves at work and soon had the harness from the dead horses.

Then one of them parted with the one he was riding and four were hitched to the stagecoach.

"You ride with me, Bill," the athlete said to the man who had lost his mount.

"All right, Gus," was the reply; "I'd jest as leave as not. I kin act as your nigger waiter, I reckon."

Gilpin was about to get into the coach when our hero, who had dismounted, stepped up and said:

"Don't you want to finish the fight?"

"I'll fight you a duel," was the quick reply. "You are a deadshot, so they say?"

"I can shoot straight enough for you, I guess."

"Well, I have an idea that I can shoot straight enough for you. Let's have it over with!"

"Just as you say."

"Hurry up, then! The young lady can be the referee. When she fires a shot with that pistol she has in her belt we'll commence."

Wild turned to the girl, who was still seated on her horse.

"You will act, won't you?" he asked. "I don't want to kill this man; I only want to show him that he is not half as smart as he thinks he is."

"I would rather not," she answered. "I don't like duels."

"All right. I guess your father will act, then."

"Yes! I'll fire a shot fur you fellers ter begin blazin' away at each other," spoke up Josh Dimple. "Step off about twenty feet apart, an' when I let a shot go in the air, begin!"

Gus Gilpin nodded.

His face was rather pale, but no signs of cowardice could be seen.

"It is not the first time I have fought a duel," he remarked, as he took his place at one end of a little open spot among the rocks.

"But it might be ther last one!" observed Cheyenne Charlie, laconically.

A calm smile played about the lips of Young Wild West.

Never once did he take his eyes off the Arizona Athlete, as the fellow walked to the position he chose.



All the coolness the boy possessed showed up at this minute.

"You mean me, I guess," he said to his foe. "But you are not going to get me! I won't hurt you much, either, for I have nothing really against you. I am ready, Mr. Dimple!"

"So am I ready!" chimed in Gilpin.

"All right, then!" exclaimed the hunter; "here she goes!"

He raised his revolver over his head and pressed the trigger.

Crack!

Wild and the Arizona Athlete stood with the muzzles of their weapons pointed to the sky, and the instant the crack of the pistol sounded down went the weapons on a level with each other's heart.

Crack!

Only one report sounded.

Up went Gilpin's hand, his weapon flying from it as though he was trying to see how far he could toss it.

Instead of sending a bullet at the young man's heart, Wild had shot at the back knuckle of his forefinger.

The bullet just grazed it, but it was enough!

The athlete had been in the act of pressing the trigger, but he let go instantly.

"There!" exclaimed Wild; "I guess the duel is over!"

"For the present it is," answered Gilpin, as he made for the coach. "But I'll get the best of you if it takes me a week!"

"All right. I will be at your service any way you want to settle it. I am sure I can outshoot you, and I feel certain that I can whip you in a fist fight. If there is any other game you think you are good at just let me know."

"Wait till we get to Kanab!" was the retort.

The next minute the stagecoach rattled off, while the band of cowboys rode along with it, all having come to the conclusion that the Arizona Athlete had met a little more than his match.

"I guess we'll follow along after them," Wild said to Josh Dimple and his companions. "The desert strip can't be so very far away. I figured that we would not reach it much before four o'clock, but when we came to this canyon I found that they were closer than I figured on. You have been that way before, I suppose?"

"Yes, we live there," was the reply.

"What were you doing so far away with the young lady, then?"

"Oh, Katy got it in her head that she wanted ter make a week's trip with us, so we let her go. Our pack-mules with ther pelts we've got must be along here somewhere if ther Injuns didn't shoot 'em."

A few minutes later they found the mules nibbling at the prickly grass at the side of the trail.

There were four of them and they were well loaded with the skins of the fur-bearing animals the party had killed.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE RUNNING FIGHT ON THE DESERT.

"Your horses look as though a drink wouldn't hurt 'em," observed Josh Dimple, when they had gathered the pack-mules together. "We'll strike a creek about a mile below, an' then yer want ter let 'em fill in, 'cause it'll be mighty hot crossin' ther sand that's ahead."

"That's right," Wild answered. "But it strikes me if this creek is the only water about here we will be apt to strike the Indians somewhere along it. About five hundred of them are supposed to be up this way, you know."

"Five hundred of 'em!" echoed the elder Dimple, his face turning pale. "You don't mean that, Young Wild West?"

"Yes, I do mean it. That is the report we got three days ago. We are going over to Kanab to meet a force of cavalry there, and we are going to do the scouting for them until the band is either subdued or killed off. That is our orders."

"An' we didn't know nothin' of this," said the old man, turning to those with him.

"Well, we've been down here in ther mountings fur nigh a week, so we wouldn't be s'posed ter know it," said Ned Nelson. "We come mighty nigh findin' it out to our sorrow, though."

"That's right, Ned," nodded Jack Dimple. "It are mighty lucky that we found somebody ter help us when that gang of about twenty of ther Moquis was chasin' us awhile ago."

"Well, I wasn't even then afraid they'd kill us," remarked the hunter. "I didn't like ther idee of Katy git-tin' in their clutches, that's why I advised ter light out an' give 'em plenty of room. I never onct thought they was on ther warpath."

"I did!" declared Nelson. "I seen that they had ther warpaint on. It's a long while since ther Moquis had ther warpaint on, an' says I to myself: 'Jack, old feller, there's goin' ter be a heap of trouble right now!' Then I jest got close ter Katy an' lit out with ther rest of yer." As they rode on for the creek the four asked Wild and his partners enough questions to find out all about them.

It was strange that neither of them had heard of Young Wild West before, but as it was the first time they had been right in that part of Arizona, though they had experienced some hot times in the Grand Canyon, which was not so very far away, that made a difference.

Young Wild West felt quite certain that they would meet some of the redskins before they started to cross the desert.

But he did not say anything just then, because he thought his fears might be groundless, and he did not want to alarm the young lady.

They were not long in reaching the creek.



The stagecoach was halted there and the horses were drinking when they rode up.

"Do you know anything about this part of ther country?" Jumping Joe asked Josh Dimple.

"I reckon I do," was the reply. "I've been here about fifty times, I reckon. This here creek runs right over ther Utah line, which ain't more'n ten miles from here. It's jest about thirty-three miles from here ter ther other side of ther sand strip. Then four more miles, which is straight an' smooth travelin', fetches yer in Kanab."

"Good enough! It's putty hard travelin' through ther alkali dust, I s'pose?"

"Well, not so very hard. Yer see, there's a bed of rock under ther dust, which ain't more'n three or four inches deep on an average. It raises thunder with yer if ther wind happens ter git up an' blow putty hard, though."

"I reckon it must. I've been in sandstorms afore now, an' I've had my eyes cut out by ther dust an' sand, too."

The Arizona Athlete was walking about watching the horses drink and talking to the men.

But he paid no attention to Young Wild West and his companions.

"I reckon that feller has got about enough of you, Wild," observed Charlie, with a grin. "You're too much for him, though he's a putty good one, for all that."

"Oh, he won't give in for awhile," was the reply. "We have begun to fight a duel, and it is quite likely he will want to make many phases of it. I don't mean to kill him unless I find that he is trying to down me by some unfair means."

The sun was shining fiercely upon the travelers, but, notwithstanding this, the Arizona Athlete gave the word for his men to start, and then he got into the coach in which he had traveled from Prescott.

The creek was forded and then away they went for the desert.

Charlie declared that he could smell the hot sand they were going to tackle so soon, but the others made no such a claim.

It was three miles away, and before starting Wild climbed a tree and took a look in the direction they were going to travel.

He could see the shining sea of whitish sand in the distance, and as the sun shone upon it with relentless force he could notice shining dots that looked like gold and silver intermingled.

The cowboys and the stagecoach were now a good mile ahead.

Wild descended the tree.

He had been unable to see another human being other than the party that had gone on ahead.

But a desert was hardly the place to look for a band of Indians.

"Everything seems to be all right, boys," he said, as he joined the group. "We have a hot ride ahead of us, so we may as well get at it."

"As we have got our pack-mules with us, we will delay you if you stick to us," remarked Katy Dimple.

"Well, that don't matter," Wild answered. "We like company sometimes."

They made pretty good time across the open stretch after leaving the creek and soon reached the commencement of the sandy waste.

They could see the stagecoach about a mile ahead of them, and all they had to do was to follow that.

Anyhow, there was a plain trail through the dry sand, and if there had not been they would have been able to lay a course, since Josh Dimple carried a pocket compass.

The cowboys were proceeding rather slowly, and they soon found out that they were gaining on them.

When they had covered a mile over the desert Wild happened to look back.

Then it was that he gave a start.

A big cloud of dust showed less than half a mile away.

But that was not all!

A band of fully two hundred Indians was coming!

"Great Scott!" cried our hero. "What do you think of that, boys?"

Charlie and Jim turned and took in the situation at a glance.

"It looks like a case of fight," the scout said, a grim smile playing about his lips. "Well, I reckon we kin give 'em a good run first, though."

"Jumpin' Jupiter!" exclaimed Josh Dimple. "I guess we'd better ride on an' leave ther pack-mules."

"No!" said Wild. "We will just catch up to the cowboys ahead, and then we'll give the red scoundrels a fight. I guess they won't force matters if we begin to drop a few."

The boy spoke so coolly that he allayed the fears of the four considerably.

The mules were forced into a wild canter now, and away they went over the sand to overtake the party ahead.

But just then someone in the Arizona Athlete's party saw the Indians coming.

Then they got a hustle on them.

The horses hitched to the stagecoach were put to a run and they got over the alkali dust at a smart gait.

But Wild and his companions rapidly gained upon them, for the mules, somehow, took a notion to run.

The redskins were yet a quarter of a mile behind them when they overtook the band of cowboys.

The men seemed to be pretty badly scared.

Gus Gilpin came out of the coach and crawled up on top, his rifle in his hand.

"What do you think about it, Young Wild West?" he called out.

"Well, I think the redskins mean to make it pretty warm for us," was the reply.

"Well, I am going to begin picking off some of them. I am a pretty good shot with a rifle."

"Go ahead! That is the only way they can be stopped."



The athlete threw himself on his stomach, and, taking careful aim, fired a shot at the advancing horde.

One of the foremost threw up his hands, and with the death-yell on his lips, fell from the back of his pony.

"That's one!" he said, nodding at our friends.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when a volley was fired by the Indians.

They must have had pretty good rifles, for the bullets cut the air over their heads and played a regular tune.

But the red demons were riding so fast that their aim was bad.

No one was hit.

"We have got to check them, boys!" cried Young Wild West, and, turning in the saddle, he opened fire with his Winchester.

Charlie and Jim followed his example.

Crack, crack, crack! Crack!

The shots rang out on the clear air with startling distinctness, and the advancing redskins tumbled right and left.

But there were at least a hundred of them and they kept right on coming.

Only a few of the cowboys had rifles, and they now began to use them.

A look of disgust came over the face of Cheyenne Charlie when he saw that they were not doing any damage.

In their eagerness to get away from the Indians the men were shooting more at random than anything else.

"That won't do!" Wild called out to them. "Make every shot tell. You ought to know that you can't afford to waste any ammunition now. Those fellows mean business, or they would never follow us on the desert. Give it to them now! Aim straight! Be sure you have one of them covered before you press a trigger."

The advice was timely.

The cowboys heeded it, and when they fired another volley three of the redskins bit the dust.

Wild and his partners again opened fire, Josh Dimple and his companions joining them.

The latter all had good rifles, and when the bullets cut down a dozen more of the pursuing Indians they came to a temporary halt.

"Now we are doing something!" Wild exclaimed. "Just give them another dose!"

Crack, crack, crack! Crac-c-c-ck!

The sharp reports rang out and almost every bullet found its billet.

It was a running fight, with the chances in favor of the pursued.

The Moquis had not been on the warpath for a long time, but they were certainly getting hard treatment just now.

It was enough to make them think they had made a mistake.

They now scattered to escape the storm of leaden hail that was being sent into their ranks.

As yet no one in the party had been even wounded,

though many shots had been sent at them by the redskins. The Arizona Athlete from his position on top of the rocking stagecoach was doing wonderful work.

"Young Wild West, you are a deadshot, and no mistake!" he shouted, as they passed swiftly over the desert. "It is almost a shame for me to think of downing you, but it has got to be done. I am going to beat you if it takes a week, as I told you before!"

"All right," was the rejoinder. "If it takes a week to fight the duel out I don't care. One thing, I don't mean to kill you, unless you try to drop me on the sly."

"Don't let anything like that get into your head! I am not built on these kind of lines. I shan't do a thing to you unless it is right on the square. I did mean to shoot you dead when we faced each other a little while ago with revolvers. I am much obliged to you for what you did. You spared my life. I won't forget that, though I will tell you right to your face that I don't like you."

"Well, I can't say that I like you very well, either. I am not the one to kill you, though, unless it be in self-defense. You are what I call a bluffer! You may have defeated a whole lot of awkward fellows in boxing, wrestling and the like, but when it comes to a fair and square go with one who is just as quick as you are you have got to go down."

"We'll see about that. Just wait till we get to Kanab."

"I am waiting."

While this rather spirited conversation was going on the speakers were keeping a watch upon the Indians.

The red demons had spread out like a huge fan and were following them at about the same rate of speed as they were traveling.

"They don't want to git too close jest yet, I reckon," remarked Cheyenne Charlie. "But they don't mean to leave us, not by a jugful!"

"No, they are trying to tire us out, I think," answered Jim Dart.

The mules were beginning to lag now, and so were the horses that were hitched to the stagecoach.

It would not be very long before the pursued party would have to halt and make a stand against their foe.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE TREACHERY OF THE INDIANS.

The scorching sun shone fiercely on the foam-covered horses and literally sapped the strength from them.

It told much more on those that were hitched to the stagecoach.

The lumbering vehicle ran hard anyhow, and with the wheels sinking in the alkali dust it was hard pulling for the horses.

Wild, Charlie and Jim could easily have made their escape, and so could the cowboys, perhaps.



But our friends did not propose to leave those who had no show to get away.

They would stay with them and fight it out.

The redskins had been gaining steadily upon them for the past ten minutes, and they now half surrounded them at a distance of probably three hundred feet.

Wild thought it time to begin picking them off again, so he gave the word.

"Make every shot tell!" he said.

As the firing began the Indians joined in, and in less than two minutes one of the cowboys was stricken by a bullet.

But the red demons were dropping right and left.

Our hero cast a swift glance over the desert.

A solitary bunch of rocks showed up a few yards off to the left.

"There is our only chance!" he cried. "Make for the rocks!"

The cowboys understood.

They realized the advantage that would be gained by making a stand behind the rocks.

The driver of the stagecoach swung the horses around and headed for it, and after him went Katy Dimple, leading the pack-mules.

The rest brought up the rear, keeping up a running fire at the redskins.

The rocks were soon reached.

There were enough of them to afford shelter for all hands.

The stagecoach was stopped in among them, and then everybody got busy.

The saddle-horses being trained to it, they were made to lie down to escape the bullets that came whizzing over the rocks.

"I guess we can hold them off now," said our hero. "There is only one way they can get us out of here, and that is to keep up the siege until we have to make a break for the want of water."

"I reckon if they only keep close enough for an hour there won't be enough of 'em left to keep us here," observed Cheyenne Charlie.

"Oh, they are not going to give us a chance to shoot them off so easy," Wild answered. "See! Even now they are getting cautious. They know we have got a good position and they will hold a pow-wow to settle on a plan of action."

This was just what the redskins did a few minutes later.

They drew away to a safe distance on the burning sand and gathered in a bunch.

Leaving Young Wild West and his friends to themselves, the Arizona Athlete called the cowboys together and said, loud enough for our friends to hear:

"Boys, as I am leader of this party, I am going to make a suggestion. It is this: One of you must ride over with a flag of truce and try to make terms with them. If you go halfway and come to a halt it is very likely one of

the redskins will come to meet you. I am willing to give them five hundred dollars if they will go off and let us alone. Now, then, who is going to volunteer to go?"

"I will!" cried Jumping Joe, stepping up.

"All right, Joe, just tie this to the muzzle of your rifle and ride out."

He handed a clean white handkerchief over and the cowboy soon rigged it into a flag of truce.

"Tell them that I have just five hundred dollars, and I am willing to give it to them if they will go back the way they came and allow us to cross the desert in peace," said the athlete, as Jumping Joe mounted his mustang.

"All right, Gus. Leave it ter me! I've made terms with redskins afore now. I'm a reg'lar diplomat, I am."

There was a curious smile on the face of Young Wild West as the cowboy rode off on his mission.

"I doubt if he has ever made terms with redskins that were on the warpath," he said, in a low tone to his companions. "Why! the rascally redskins will agree to anything and then keep up the fight just the same!"

"As sure as you're born they will!" chuckled Cheyenne Charlie, who seemed to look into the matter as more of a joke than anything else.

"You're right!" exclaimed Josh Dimple. "I've had lots ter do with Injuns in my day. I ain't seen very many what could be trusted in a deal. They're scarcer than hen's teeth."

"But five hundred dollars may be the means of inducin' 'em to quit," spoke up his son. "They oughter know that they can't git at us here without losin' ther biggest part of their number. It'll be much better fur 'em ter take ther five hundred dollars an' not run ther risk of losin' any more men."

"Oh, they will most likely agree to it," said Wild. "But whether they will keep their agreement or not remains to be seen."

"Then you don't approve of trying to make terms with them?" asked Jack Dimple.

"No!"

"You think we can win, then?"

"Yes. Our horses can stand the thirst as long as theirs can, and that gives us an equal chance. Your pack-mules and the stagecoach could be left behind, and we would still have four extra horses to fill in for any that might give out. We could keep right ahead and make a running fight of it all the way over the sand, if needs be. Of course, a few of us might go under in the operation, but I hardly think that would be the case. The more we thinned out the ranks of the redskins the more they would be apt to keep out of range, and when they keep out of range of our bullets we would be quite safe from theirs."

"Well, you kin bet that I'm willin' ter let ther mules an' ther pelts go!" exclaimed Josh Dimple. "My darter is worth more than all ther pelts in ther world, I calculate!"

"I should say she was!" spoke up Ned Nelson, looking at his sweetheart fondly. "She's ter be my wife as soon as



we end this huntin' trip an' git back ter Kanab, yer know."

"I know. I was ter buy her a dress fur ther 'casion from ther proceeds of ther hunt, too."

"Well, I reckon ther one she's got on is good enough fur me. 'Tain't clothes that makes a good woman, anyhow."

Katy smiled and allowed her lover to take her hand.

"I reckon you're right, Ned," she said, smiling at him. "It's ther heart what makes the woman, an' the man, too. You told me the other day that I had your heart, an' if that's the case, why, you've got mine. A fair 'change ain't no robbery, I've always heard."

This was the first time the couple had talked like that before the girl's father and brother and they looked just the least bit surprised.

"'Tain't much of a time fur love matters jest now, I reckon," remarked Jack.

"If you had a sweet-faced gal like I've got mebbe you'd think it was jest ther time," retorted Ned.

"Sweet-faced—like you've got, hey? Is a gal what's got about a million freckles on her face sweet-lookin'?"

"Shet up, Jack!" cried his sister, angrily. "You've got bushels of freckles yourself."

"Well, I don't claim ter be sweet-faced!" And the young man burst into a hearty laugh, his own words sounded so ridiculous to his ears.

This talk was very amusing to Wild, Charlie and Jim.

It was something unusual, and, in spite of the fact that a grave danger threatened them, they enjoyed it.

They now watched the messenger with the flag of truce.

Jumping Joe halted about halfway to the band of redskins.

Then in a very short time one of the Moquis rode out to meet him, he, too, carrying a white flag.

"They are willin' ter make terms all right," observed Jack Dimple.

No one said anything to this.

The cowboy and Indian talked for about five minutes and then the Indian rode back to his band.

Jumping Joe remained where he was.

In a very few minutes the Indian came back, and then the cowboy turned and rode back for the rocks.

"How did you make out, Joe?" Gus Gilpin asked, eagerly, as the man rode up and dismounted.

"Putty good, I reckon," was the reply. "They'll take ther five hundred an' light out right away."

"Good! They shall have it. I would only spend it foolishly anyhow. It is much better than being worried and shot down, I should say."

"Well, give me ther money. I'll go an' give it ter 'em, an' then we've got ter run ther risk of 'em doin' as they agreee."

"I guess they will keep their agreement. Joe, I will take the money to them myself. That redskin is there waiting for it. Perhaps I can tell better whether he is sincere when I have a few words with him."

"All right, Gus."

The Arizona Athlete at once mounted the cowboy's horse.

"You had better keep on your guard when you get to the redskin," Young Wild West called out, warningly.

"I know my business!" was the quick retort.

"Well, I hope you do, but I doubt it."

Gilpin paid no attention, but rode away at a canter.

He did not notice that the lone Indian had moved back much closer to the main body of redskins since Jumping Joe left him, but our friends did.

Wild suspected treachery.

When he saw two more of the Indians start out to meet the white man he got up and commanded his horse to rise from the ground.

"What are you going to do, Wild?" asked Jim Dart.

"I am going to ride out that way because I believe the redskins are up to something," was the reply.

There was no use in questioning the young deadshot further.

Dart and Charlie knew that only too well.

Wild mounted Spitfire and started off at a trot after Gilpin.

The athlete was riding right ahead just as though he was certain that everything would be all right.

There was no doubt that he thought it would be all right.

As Gilpin reached the waiting redskin the other two came up.

He was seen to parley with them for a couple of minutes and then something happened that the majority of those among the rocks had not figured on.

The two Indians, who were on foot, suddenly seized the Arizona Athlete and pulled him from his horse.

There was a short struggle and then Gilpin was overpowered.

The redskin on horseback dropped his flag of truce, and, uttering a yell of defiance, leaned over and caught the captured athlete and pulled him over his horse's neck.

Gilpin had been disarmed and his wrists tied together in much less time than it takes to record it.

And when this all happened Young Wild West was nearly two hundred yards away.

"Just as I thought," muttered the daring boy. "Gilpin is a fool when it comes to Indian tactics. Well, I will try and save him, but it looks like an impossibility."

The sorrel stallion was let out to his utmost speed now.

He gained rapidly on the three Indians, who were compelled to move rather slowly with their prisoner, since two of them were on foot.

But in a few seconds the mounted redskin had the prisoner well balanced before him, and then the others turned and ran for all they were worth.

Wild saw that there was only one chance to save the Arizona Athlete.

He must drop the redskin who had him on the horse.

Then he might be able to dash up, get him on the sorrel



with him and dash back for the rocks with a storm of bullets whistling after him.

It was a daring feat to do.

But our hero had performed such daring feats before, and he was not afraid to attempt the trick.

Like a meteor the sorrel stallion swooped toward the Indians and their captive.

Wild raised his rifle to his shoulder, and, taking quick aim, pressed the trigger.

Crack!

As the report sounded both redskin and captive tumbled from the back of the galloping horse.

But a score or more warriors were now heading for the spot.

Wild realized that he was too late.

But with the undaunted pluck and determination he possessed, he kept on.

Whizz—whizz!

Bullets were flying about his head when he was yet fifty yards from the helpless Arizona Athlete.

"It can't be done!" he exclaimed under his breath. "I'll have to give it up and try some other way to rescue him."

He pulled upon the rein to turn the sorrel.

Just then, by a strange freak, a bullet hit the bit-ring of the bridle and the stallion, instead of obeying, reared high in the air.

The action was so sudden and unexpected that Young Wild West was thrown to the ground, and, yelling with delight, the Moqui warriors ran to the spot.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CAPTURED BY THE REDSKINS.

The yelling Indians closed in on Wild as he was in the act of rising to his feet.

Crack!

He fired once and one of them went down with a bullet in his thigh.

Then the weapon was knocked from his grasp, while the barrel of a rifle hit him on the side of the head and rendered him temporarily unconscious.

The daring boy was quickly bound and then, with exultant cries, the treacherous Moquis made for the spot where the rest of the band were running about to show their joy at the double capture.

Then the prisoners were thrown over the backs of ponies and the redskins turned and made for the rolling grass land they had so lately left to follow the party over the desert.

Wild came to with a head that ached considerably just as the band got under way.

He looked around wonderingly for a second or two and then it all came to him.

He could see that they were riding rapidly over the

burning sand and that the party at a halt among the rocks was being left behind.

Wild lifted his head and looked around him.

He was hanging over the back of the horse by the middle and thongs were passed from his neck beneath the belly of the animal to his ankles to keep him in position.

Redskins were close on all sides of him and he could see nothing of the Arizona Athlete.

But that he was among the rascally redmen he had not the least doubt.

The ponies of the Indians needed no urging. It seemed as though they could smell the green grass and water that lay but a few minutes from them.

With the hot dust flying all around him our hero was borne along.

It was his first experience with the Moqui tribe, but he had been among so many of the different tribes of the Indians that he concluded that there was little or no difference in the way they would be apt to treat their prisoners.

The fact that they had broken away from the reservation and taken to the warpath was evidence that they hated the palefaces, even if it was not natural that they should.

That meant that they would most likely put them to torture.

But Young Wild West had been in many a bad fix before.

He did not fear the outcome, but rested on the thought that he would get away from them in some way or other.

Strategy would bring it about, if force of numbers would not, and both Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart were pretty well versed in strategy.

It was not many minutes before the edge of the sandy waste was reached and the green grass could be seen once more.

But the Indians did not stop until they reached the creek.

They had diverged from the trail somewhat and halted at a wild spot something like half a mile from the place where our friends had forded the little stream.

The pony Wild was upon was allowed to drink while he was still hanging over its back.

Though it had been but half an hour before when the animals must have drank their fill, they were now as thirsty as though they had gone a day without water.

The dust and heat of the sun had parched their throats on the desert.

Wild felt like taking a drink himself as he looked down at the water in the creek.

It was anything but a pleasant position to be placed in, but he stood it without a murmur.

Pretty soon the horses had swallowed what they wanted of the water, and then the Indians set out across an uneven tract for a patch of woods that could be seen in the distance.

Wild craned his neck and saw the woods.

He also saw something else.



It was a column of smoke rising above the treetops.

"There's the camp of the whole body of the redskins," he thought. "The chances are that they will make it warm for me, for these braves must certainly know that I did a whole lot toward thinning their ranks."

But he did not give away to anything like fear.

It was time enough for that when there was no chance of getting out of the scrape he was in.

The woods was only a trifle more than a quarter of a mile from the creek, so it was soon reached by the red men.

So far they had not paid any more attention to the boy than if he had been a sack of grain.

But as they rode through the undergrowth and came to a natural clearing in the woods two of the braves picked up sticks and began to beat him on the back.

"If you want me to howl so as to let your gang know that you are bringing paleface prisoners in, I won't do it!" cried the dashing young deadshot.

"Ugh!" answered one of the redskins; "paleface boy heap much coward!"

"I guess you don't know what a coward is like, if you say that," was the cool rejoinder.

The blows smarted, but not a sound that was anything like a cry of pain came from our hero's lips.

He could be as stoical as an Indian if he wanted to, and he knew that if he showed that he could stand the pain they would let up on him all the sooner.

Just then he heard a yell of pain, followed by a string of invectives.

The voice was that of the Arizona Athlete.

The braves struck him three or four more stinging blows, and then desisted and left him.

A minute later Gus Gilpin was howling in agony.

The Moquis were having great fun with him, since he would cry out for them.

Wild lifted his head, and saw that they had arrived at the headquarters of the rebelling Indians.

Back of the edge of the little clearing was a steep cliff, and directly at the foot of this lay the camp stretched along for a distance of a hundred yards.

All along through the woods as far as our hero could see from his hanging position were groups of Indians scattered here and there.

Two or three tepees were all that were to be seen, and these were located close together.

It was in front of one of these that the fire which sent up the column of smoke our hero had seen as they left the creek was kindled.

Standing near the fire was the chief.

He was gaudily attired in a semi-barbaric fashion, and a look of triumph shone from his piercing black eyes as the two paleface prisoners were brought to him.

Gus Gilpin had been beaten with sticks until he was black and blue.

Wild could feel where he had received the blows, too, but he was not hurt much.

It was the first our hero had seen of the Arizona Athlete since he had failed in the attempt to save him from the redskins.

Gilpin's face was a study.

It was plain that he was badly frightened.

As the ponies bearing the two prisoners were halted in front of the chief the old warrior gave a grunt of satisfaction.

"We bring Running Elk two palefaces who have slain many braves to-day," said one of the braves, speaking in the language of his people.

The chief frowned and looked very wicked.

Then some more talk in their own language passed between the braves and the chief, after which Running Elk, as he was called, ordered the prisoners to be removed from the ponies.

Wild was glad to get in an upright position once more.

It was evident that the Arizona Athlete was, too, for he breathed a sigh of relief.

"Well, chief, what is the matter with you?" asked our hero, looking at Running Elk just as though he felt that there was something wrong with him.

"Ugh!" was the reply, while a fierce scowl added to the ugliness of the answer.

"Are you getting crazy, chief?" went on the boy, fearlessly. "Don't you know that the soldiers from the forts will be down on you and punish you for leaving the reservation and attacking the palefaces? You surely are crazy, Running Elk."

"Paleface boy talk heap much; say nothing."

"You think so, eh? Well, you will find out that I am saying just what is right. Your braves have attacked the palefaces, and you will surely suffer for it. The soldiers will be here as thick as the leaves on the trees in a few hours. Then Running Elk will wish he was back on the reservation, hoeing his corn and smoking the pipe of peace. What a fool you are, Running Elk!"

This cool talk from Wild surprised Gilpin as much as it did the chief and his braves.

There was nothing that would indicate that Wild was doing his best to give the redskins a good lecture upon their evil and vicious ways.

It seemed strange that he could stand there with his hands bound behind him and talk that way.

It was plain that his words had considerable effect on the redskins, though.

Running Elk did not start in and tell how great he was, and all that, as chiefs generally do when they get a prisoner before them. He simply stood looking at Wild with folded arms and knitted brows.

Do you think they will let us go?" asked Gilpin, looking at Wild anxiously.

"Of course they will," was the reply. "They dare not hold us prisoners. They know what they will get if they do."

This was said to bluff the chief, but the athlete thought Wild really meant it.



"I am willing to give them the five hundred dollars if they will let us go."

Running Elk gave a start when he heard this.

But the young chief who had led the chase on the desert quickly stepped up and said something in their own lingo.

The chief nodded.

Then he gave the word, and a search was made through the pockets of the Arizona Athlete.

The young man had been foolish enough to carry all the money he had with him, and with guttural exclamations of delight, the redskins relieved him of it.

The Moquis well knew the value of money, and they began figuring on what they would do with their share of it when they got it.

The eyes of Running Elk fairly glistened as he took the captured roll, which must have contained a couple of thousand dollars, and when he placed it in the inner pocket of the buckskin coat he wore some of the braves put on long faces, no doubt wondering if that was the last they would ever see of the money.

The chief next ordered Wild to be searched.

But our hero had been among lawless men so much that he had found it advisable not to carry much money on his person.

The bulk of what he took with him he always kept in a secret pocket of his saddle-bags.

And just now his saddle-bags were on his sorrel stallion, Spitfire.

Where the intelligent animal was he did not know, but he was quite certain that the redskins had not captured him.

Wild was not sure whether Spitfire had been hit by a bullet or not, but he had an idea that the bullet had merely grazed him somewhere.

Running Elk kicked him in disgust when he found but a few dollars on him.

"All right, chief!" our hero exclaimed. "You will be sorry for kicking me before many hours, see if you are not!"

"Ugh!" was the retort. "Tie palefaces to tree."

There happened to be two trees close together within a few feet of the fire, so the captives were bound to them in upright positions.

"I guess we're in for it now," said Gilpin, uneasily. "They mean to kill us."

"Oh, I don't think they will," was Wild's cool retort. "We will live long enough to finish our duel, I guess."

"Do you really think that way, Young Wild West?"

"I certainly do. I have been in many worse boxes than this, and I have always got out of them."

"Well, I have never been captured by Indians before."

"Is that so?"

"Yes."

"You haven't been around much, then?"

"Oh, yes, I have. I have lived in Arizona several years,

and this is the first time I was ever among Indians that were hostile."

"You didn't go where they were, then. I have had several adventures with the Apaches the past year. These Moquis are not near as savage as the Apaches are, so we needn't be worried. There will come a way to get us out of this scrape. My partners will see to that."

"I hope they do. I have lost every dollar I had! But I am willing to let that go if I can only get back to Prescott."

## CHAPTER VII.

### CHARLIE AND JIM FOLLOW THE MOQUIS TO THEIR CAMP.

When Wild's partners saw him captured by the redskins they were dismayed for the time being.

"Great Gimlets!" cried Cheyenne Charlie. "That's too bad, Jim!"

"Yes," replied Dart. "If the Arizona Athlete was fool enough to let the Moquis get hold of him, Wild should have let him go. We could have figured out a way of getting him from them afterward. But now that they have got Wild, too, we are going to have a hard time of it, and I know it."

"Well, there's only one thing to do."

"What's that?"

"We've got to git Wild away from ther red galoots."

"Yes, but how?"

"That's what I don't know jest yet."

"I suppose it would be a good idea to send someone right through to Kanab and get some of the cavalry to come here."

"That's right. But it must be someone what kin be depended on what goes."

"I guess one of the cowboys will do."

The cowboys were very much disturbed over the capture of their friend, the Arizona Athlete.

They were at a loss what to do when Jim walked over to them.

"See here!" he exclaimed. "Someone has got to ride to Kanab as fast as he can. There are a lot of cavalymen there, who are on the lookout for these redskins. One of you take the best horse you have got and ride over and report that Young Wild West has been captured by the Moquis. That will bring them here in a hurry. In the meantime we will work for the rescue of Wild and Gilpin by strategy."

"Hooray!" cried Jumping Joe, taking off his hat. "Ther young feller knows what's ter be done, boys. Bill, you've got ther best horse in ther bunch. You light out fur ther cavalry."

"All right," answered Bill, and he hastened to make ready for the ride over the desert.



Two minutes later he was riding away on his errand.

"Now, then, what's ther next thing ter do?" asked Jumping Joe, coming over to where our friends were.

"I guess we had better get out of this alkali dust," answered Jim. "We'll burn up if we stay here all day."

"If we kin git back to where ther attack was made on ther stage-coach we'd be able to hold ther Injuns off," observed the scout. "Jim, let's you an' me ride on ahead an' do a little scoutin'. Ther rest kin come along slowly, an' we'll meet 'em an' let 'em know what's best to be done."

It was getting toward the middle of the afternoon now, but the sun seemed to be as hot as ever.

As they were ready to start Charlie looked at Josh Dimple and said:

"I guess it would be safe for you folks to go on after ther feller we sent ther message with. Ther gal won't stand no chance of being caught by ther Injuns then."

Dimple thought the same way.

His son and Ned Nelson wanted to remain with them and help rescue Young Wild West, though.

After a little talk it was decided that they would remain with our friends and the cowboys, while the old man and Katy struck out for the town the other side of the sandy waste.

"It's right that you should do all you could to help save Young Wild West, Ned," said the young man's sweetheart. "He saved us, you know. If it hadn't been for him and his partners the redskins would have cleaned out the other crowd and got us sure!"

"All right, Katy; you go right on with pop, then."

So the two mounted and started across the sand with the pack-horses following them.

Charlie and Jim now rode after the fast disappearing Indians, who had reached the edge of the desert by this time.

Jumping Joe led his men in the direction the scout had told him to, leaving the stage-coach where it was.

They did not want to be encumbered with the lumbering vehicle just now.

Charlie and Jim did not ride very fast until the Indians were out of sight behind the vegetation that grew near the edge of the sand strip.

They did not want the redskins to know that they were following them.

When they finally reached the edge of the sand both breathed a sigh of relief.

Sparse as the vegetation was near the edge of the wide strip of barren waste, it looked awfully inviting.

"Ther redskins has gone for ther woods over there," said Charlie, as he brought his horse to a halt and shaded his eyes.

The woods in question was some little distance from where they were, since it was the other side of the little stream of water that came down from the mountains.

They waited until they caught sight of the band, and then, when they saw that they were really heading for the woods, they set out for the creek.

"My throat is as dry as a powder horn, even if I was only on the desert a short time!" declared Dart, as he dismounted to get a drink.

"I reckon ther sun shinin' down on that sand would make anybody thirsty," answered the scout. "It would make a feller dry even if he had jest had a drink."

They allowed the horses to drink what they wanted, and then, mounting, they headed for the woods, taking a roundabout course.

"It might be that we kin git a chance to git Wild and that galoot of an Arizona Athlete away from ther redskins by a trick," Charlie remarked, as they rode along. "Sich things has been done, you know, Jim."

"Yes," was the reply, "but I am afraid that the whole bunch is there, and that being the case, the chances are that we won't be able to get close enough."

"Well, one thing is sartin', an' that is that Wild has got to be saved."

The scout laid stress on what he said.

He was willing to take any kind of a risk to save the boy.

They at length reached the woods at a point about a quarter of a mile from where the Indian camp was.

They had located it easily by the smoke that arose from the solitary fire that was kept burning in front of the chief's tepee.

Once there they looked around for a suitable place to leave their horses, while they went up to the edge of the camp and located things.

They had no difficulty in finding a place, and then they struck out without further delay.

As it was quite likely the redskins had sentinels posted about, they moved with extreme caution.

Used to that sort of a thing as they were, they made pretty good headway through the woods.

They could hear the barking of the dogs belonging to the redskins before they had gone far.

It would be a queer sort of an Indian camp if there were no dogs in it.

The redskins are very fond of dog meat, and whenever they held a feast in honor of some event they usually slaughtered the fattest ones.

This left the poor, scraggy mongrels to hang around and bark and howl nights.

Just now the barking of the dogs did a good turn for Charlie and Jim.

The sounds led them in the right direction.

Pretty soon they came in sight of the camp through the trees and shrubbery.

They were approaching from the south end, and were right at the face of the cliff before they knew it.

A good look told them that they could proceed no further in that direction without being seen by some of the redskins.

"We'll switch off to ther left," whispered the scout.

"That's right," replied Jim.



They did so, working their way along with the utmost caution.

Around they went in a semi-circle, and then they took the risk of moving in toward the center of the camp.

About fifty yards from the edge of the camp they saw an Indian standing by a tree with a rifle in the hollow of his arm.

A sudden idea popped in Charlie's head.

He touched Jim on the arm and motioned for him to remain right where he was.

Then the scout drew his bowie knife and began working his way toward the redskin guard.

"I reckon I'll take your place an' watch ther camp a while," he muttered under his breath. "Wild has got to be saved, an' that's all there is to it!"

Nearer and nearer he got to the redskin.

Charlie did not want to kill the Indian in cold blood, though he knew the fellow would not hesitate to serve him that way.

On second thought, he thrust his knife back in the sheath and took hold of the barrel of his Winchester in the form of a club.

"I'll knock ther red galoot down," he thought. "Then Jim an' me kin bind an' gag him afore he comes to."

Just then the redskin moved from the tree and came straight for Charlie.

He had not seen or heard him, but acted that way just by pure chance.

But the scout thought he had attracted his attention, and he got ready for business.

Crouching behind a bush, he waited, scarcely daring to breathe.

When he got within six feet of him the redskin paused and looked in the direction of the camp.

Charlie began to straighten up, preparatory to striking the blow that would fell the sentinel.

Just as he assumed an upright position a twig cracked beneath his foot.

The Moqui heard the sound, and as quick as a flash he turned and saw the scout.

Up went his rifle to his shoulder, and his lips parted to utter a warning cry.

But that was as far as he got.

Never had Cheyenne Charlie acted more quickly.

There was a lightning-like move on his part and—  
Thud!

Down went the brave, Charlie catching him as he fell, so there would be no crashing noise in the bushes.

Jim had been watching every move that had been made by his partner, and he was on hand right away.

"I was going to shoot him if you had not fired just as you did," he whispered.

"Oh, I wasn't goin' to let ther measly coyote pull a trigger, or yell, either," was the reply. "Now, then, jest git somethin' in his mouth, so he can't holler when he comes to."

An improvised gag was soon made from the strap the redskin wore about his waist for a belt.

Then he was bound hand and foot by means of some stout cord our friends had with them.

They always went supplied with it, as they never knew just when it might come in handy.

Not satisfied with having bound him in a helpless state, they tied him to a tree.

As warm as it was, the savage had a blanket thrown over his shoulder and wound about his middle when Charlie struck him down.

It was a red and yellow blanket, and as Charlie took it up and looked at it he gave a nod of satisfaction.

"It's a new one, I reckon," he muttered. "Well, I'll have to put it on, though it's plenty warm enough without it."

The Indian had been bareheaded, with a small bunch of eagle feathers stuck in his hair.

Charlie next took the feathers and thrust them in his own hair.

Then he pulled his long black locks over so they nearly covered his face.

At a distance he would surely have been taken for a redskin.

He could act like one, and as he picked up his rifle and began walking back and forth, Jim gave a nod of approval.

Though it was hardly necessary for him to remain there, Jim did so.

The Indian had been rendered unconscious by the blow he had received, and he showed no signs of recovery yet.

But let us follow Charlie.

He gradually worked his way nearer to the camp, and in five minutes from the time he had donned the disguise he was looking at Wild and Gilpin from a distance of only about ten yards.

It was the first he had got a good look at them, and when he saw them bound to the two trees he gave a grunt of satisfaction.

Wild and the Arizona Athlete were conversing, as the scout could see, and as the redskins were not paying any particular attention to them just then, he concluded that they were not to be harmed right away, anyhow.

It would be dangerous for him to go much closer, for if he did he would surely be seen by some of the Indians, and then his disguise would be penetrated.

Cheyenne Charlie began to do some thinking.

Just what move to make he did not know.

## CHAPTER VIII.

WILD WINS ANOTHER POINT IN THE DUEL, AND THEN  
ESCAPES WITH HIS OPPONENT.

Wild and the Arizona Athlete had not been tied to the trees very long when Running Elk, the chief, decided that



he had better torture them a little, just to show them that the redmen meant business.

The fact was that our hero's words had made a deep impression on the chief.

He had not made up his mind whether he would kill the prisoners or not.

He had listened to the story of the young chief, who declared that Wild had been the one to do the most damage of any of the palefaces.

"We will torture them, and then we will hold a council and settle on what is to be done with them," the chief said in his own language to the minor leaders of the band, who gathered at his tepee.

This being decided upon, they made ready to begin their fiendish work.

"What are they up to?" Gilpin whispered, as the chief and his advisers came out of the tepee and walked up before them.

"They mean to have some fun with us, I guess," Wild answered.

Our hero could tell pretty well by the way the Indians acted that they were going to do something.

"Ugh!" exclaimed Running Elk, shaking his fist at the two helpless whites. "Me make palefaces cry; they will act like old squaws who have lost their sight; they will beg Running Elk to kill them, so they will no longer feel pain! Palefaces heap much cowards!"

"You will find that I am not a coward," retorted Wild, looking the redskin in the eyes.

"Nor I, either!" spoke up Gilpin, imitating the fearless manner displayed by our hero.

"Both heap much cowards!" grunted the chief.

"I will fight Running Elk any way he chooses, and show him I am no coward!" exclaimed Wild.

"So will I!" chimed in the Arizona Athlete.

"Palefaces heap much fight?" queried the chief, after he had thought a moment.

"Yes!" they both answered.

"Running Elk and his braves will see."

Much to their astonishment, they were cut loose, while a crowd of painted warriors got around them.

"Paleface braves go fight!" said the chief, hitting out with his hands and kicking his feet, indicating that they were to use the weapons Nature had provided them with.

"Come on, a couple of you!" answered our hero. "We'll soon show you whether we can fight or not!"

"Ugh!" grunted the chief. "Palefaces must fight each other."

"Oh!"

Wild understood now.

Then, turning to the Arizona Athlete, he added:

"I guess it will be a good chance to finish the fist fight now."

"All right," was the spirited rejoinder. "But which ever way it goes, the duel will not be finished. You may

beat me on some points, but I will prove to be the victor in the end, if we live long enough to finish our duel."

"You only think that way, Gilpin," retorted Wild, with a calm smile.

The two almost forgot that they were prisoners in the hands of a band of hostile redskins.

Both were anxious to fight it out with their fists, because each had the opinion that he was the best man.

The Indians looked amazed when they saw how ready and willing the two palefaces were to fight.

They had expected they would refuse to do anything like that for the amusement of the chief and his braves.

Wild rubbed the muscles of his arms to get the blood in circulation.

"When you get ready, say the word, Gilpin," he said, coolly.

"I am ready now," was the reply.

"All right. Let yourself go!"

They began sparring for an opening right away, while the Indians crowded around and watched with interest.

Biff!

Gilpin landed a blow on our hero's shoulder which sent him back several feet.

The Arizona Athlete was going to fight for all he was worth, for he had just the least bit of a grudge against the handsome young fellow he was fighting with.

He had met with such success in Prescott and the other places he had fought in that he was sore at having met his match in a person much younger than him.

The blow he received only made Wild the more cautious.

Gilpin knew his business, whether it came natural to him, or whether he had learned it.

He was just as anxious to defeat Wild there in the Indian camp as he would have been on the stage of a concert saloon in Prescott.

But Young Wild West did not mean to be defeated.

Defeat was something that he had never experienced.

He now began to rely on his foot-work, and he kept out of the way of the swings of his adversary.

Suddenly Gilpin feinted with his left and let go a straight right for the jaw that might have ended the fight if it had landed.

But it did not land.

Wild dodged, and while the athlete was still coming toward him sent a left punch to his stomach.

With a gasp Gilpin doubled himself, and sat down upon the ground with a jar.

Several of the braves applauded.

An Indian likes to see a good fight, no matter whether it is fought with weapons or not.

The Arizona Athlete being toughened from his training, soon recovered.

"You should be careful and not hit too low," he said, pantingly.

"I struck you above the belt," was the calm rejoinder.



"Now look out for yourself, for I am going to give you another in the same place!"

The pit of Gilpin's stomach was the weakest spot that could be hit, and he knew it.

The effects of the blow hung right to him, and weakened somewhat, he put on an anxious look.

Wild saw that he had gained an advantage, so he decided to hurry matters.

After some very pretty maneuvering he fainted for the stomach, holding his right in readiness for a swing.

The move was a successful one, for Gilpin lowered his guard to protect his stomach.

Spat!

Wild struck as quick as lightning, and the full force of the blow caught his opponent on the point of the jaw.

Down went Gilpin in a dazed condition.

He was done for, as far as fighting that way was concerned.

Young Wild West folded his arms and looked at the redskins.

"Do any of you want to try me?" he asked.

"Ugh!" grunted Running Elk. "Paleface boy heap much fight."

"Yes, I guess I can whip you, too, chief. You had better try me."

The Arizona Athlete now managed to get to a sitting posture.

"You put me out, Young Wild West," he said, "and you did it quickly, too. Never mind! That is only one phase of the duel. There are more to follow."

"All right. The more the merrier. I like the exercise, Gilpin," replied our hero.

The defeated man arose to his feet, rubbing the spot where the knockout punch had landed.

Just then there was a fierce yelping near by, and the next moment a dog came tearing through the crowd of redskins with a small bush tied to its tail!

There was nothing so very amazing about this, but the redskins scattered, nevertheless.

They no doubt thought the cur had gone suddenly crazy, and they got out of the way in a hurry.

"This way, Wild!" a voice called out from the direction the dog had come from.

Both Wild and Gilpin heard it.

"Run for your life!" exclaimed our hero, looking at his defeated foe.

The Arizona Athlete understood.

Like a shot he darted away, Wild following close at his heels.

"Leg it!" said the voice of Cheyenne Charlie, and then Wild saw the scout in the act of throwing an Indian blanket from his form.

Wild knew what had happened.

Charlie and Jim had come to the rescue.

The two prisoners got outside the lines of the redskins before they realized what had happened.

"To the horses!" cried Jim Dart, as he got up from the bushes. "Come on!"

All four were running like deers now.

The Arizona Athlete could keep up with them very well, since he was well trained.

But the Indians were not long in starting in pursuit.

Some of them mounted their horses and others came on foot.

As the four darted along through the trees a volley of bullets came after them.

But it was almost impossible for them to be hit in the woods.

There were too many trees to intercept the bullets.

They had start enough to reach the horses of Charlie and Jim before the redskins gained any.

Just as they reached the horses a neigh of delight sounded.

Wild pricked up his ears.

He recognized the neigh as coming from Spitfire, his faithful stallion.

Sure enough!

The sorrel bounded into view and lowered his head to rub his nose on the shoulder of his young master.

Wild merely took time to pat the animal's neck, and then he vaulted into the saddle.

Jim Dart got upon the back of his horse without loss of time.

"Here you go!" he called out to Gilpin. "You can ride double with me."

The Arizona Athlete clutched at the chance like a drowning man does at a straw.

He was on the horse with Dart in a twinkling.

Charlie was the last to mount, and bringing up the rear he started out to make his escape before the hail of bullets.

Out of the woods went the three horses, Jim's getting over the ground with his double burden with apparent ease.

Jim was leading the way toward the point he expected to find the cowboys, while Charlie remained in the rear, now engaged in firing every time he got a good chance at their pursuers.

Crack! Crack! Crac-c-c-ck!

Shots were being fired rapidly now, and it was only a miracle that kept our friends from being hit.

Up to this time the redskins who were on foot had kept ahead in the pursuit, but now the horsemen began to forge ahead of them.

The nearest of these was perhaps fifty yards behind our friends.

Wild and Gilpin had nothing to shoot with, so they had to content themselves with hoping to get clear of the redskins.

Our hero could easily have outdistanced them in the long run, but he did not even try to get ahead.

Jim was leading the way, and he kept close behind him.



On the comparative open stretch they would make good targets for their pursuers.

Jim and the Arizona Athlete were the biggest mark for them, since they could not lean over good.

But help was close at hand.

Suddenly the clatter of hoofs was heard, and the next instant the crowd of cowboys came into view.

Yelling like so many demons, they charged to meet the pursuing redskins.

As not more than a dozen had mounted to give chase, they immediately came to a halt when they saw the cowboys.

They were not going to take the chance of fighting superior numbers.

"Whooppee!" shouted Cheyenne Charlie. "We're all right, boys! Give 'em a good volley an' then come on!"

The cowboys sent a volley at the halted redskins, and then wheeling their steeds, joined in the flight.

"Which way will we go?" shouted Jumping Joe, as he got close to Wild.

"Back to the desert," was the reply. "We will ride right on across. I hardly think the Moquis will follow us far."

"All right. You're ther leader; you know your business, Young Wild West."

As the cowboys had the horses that had been hitched to the stage-coach with them Gilpin changed from Jim's steed to one of them, and then they had pretty plain sailing, so to speak.

Back to the desert they went, reaching it just as they saw about a hundred of the redskins coming after them nearly a mile away.

All felt that they had an even chance of getting away from them now.

## CHAPTER IX.

### WILD HAS A QUARREL WITH A COLONEL.

Wild, Jim and Charlie were now riding along together.

The scout told how he had caught one of the mongrel curs belonging to the Moqui camp and tied the bush to its tail.

He had sent the animal off with a kick, and of course it made straight for the camp.

"I reckoned it would sorter excite ther red galoots a little," he added. "Great Gimlets! You'd have thought a troop of cavalry had hit 'em when that dog run among them with that bush jumpin' in ther air behind him!"

The scout chuckled as he thought of it.

Jim had left the redskin tied to the tree, just as he was coming to from the effects of the blow Charlie had given him.

It was quite likely that he had been released before this.

"Now, then," said Wild, "we will stop long enough when we get to the stage-coach to get what things of value

there are there, and then we must light out straight for the other side of the sand strip. I want to get hold of a shooter or two, too."

"There's half a dozen of them in the stage-coach," spoke up the Arizona Athlete. "You can take what you want, Young Wild West. Nothing is too good for you. But I want you to understand that our duel is not over with yet, not by any means. I am going to win out."

"Well, I will give you a week to do it in," was the laughing reply. "But you haven't made much headway so far."

"But I will, though. There is wrestling, jumping, running, fencing and bowie-knife fight on horseback yet. I am first-class at all those. You just wait. I don't want to kill you, but I do want to beat you in this duel we have started."

"Well, you shall have a try at me in any way you please. I am accommodating, if I do say it myself. All I want you to do is to get through with the duel in a week, because I expect to leave this part of the country in that time."

"Why, do you think ther Injun uprisin' will be over by that time?" asked Jumping Joe.

"Yes; it will be over as soon as the cavalry get at the redskins and give them a good drubbing. They did not need us at all. All they had to do was to cross the desert and go for the rascals."

"But they did not know where they were, I suppose," spoke up Gilpin.

"That's the way with them. They want someone like us to go and locate them for them. I consider it a useless errand that we have been sent on, but as we get paid good for it, it is all right."

The Indians had not fired a shot since they had reached the desert.

Evidently they wanted to get near enough to make their shots tell.

While our friends might have picked some of them off at that distance, they did not try it.

It was time enough when the red fiends got started.

Before they reached the stage-coach Wild saw that the redskins were gaining upon them.

But the cowboys were not riding as fast as they could.

"Get a little more of a move on your horses, boys!" he called out, leading the way.

Then they made a spurt and soon reached the stage-coach.

Our hero found that there were plenty of weapons inside the vehicle.

The Arizona Athlete had come well supplied with everything.

He took a rifle and a brace of six-shooters, and then advised Gilpin to take what he wanted from the outfit and light out for the other side of the desert.

Some of the things they could not very well take, but they got the articles that were of the most value and were ready to leave in less than two minutes.



The Indians were pretty close to them by this time, and as they got going again a couple of shots whistled over their heads.

"I guess I will try this rifle," said Wild.

It was not a Winchester, but was one made by a concern that claimed to put out the best.

The dashing young deadshot picked out the young chief who had been the leader of the party that captured him, and waited for him to make a hostile move.

He did not have to wait more than half a minute.

The chief was armed with a rifle, and suddenly he placed it to his shoulder and fired.

Wild took note of the fact that the bullet came pretty close to his head.

It was evident that he was the target the Moqui intended to hit.

Then our hero tried the new rifle.

Crack!

As the report rang out the redskin chief reeled and dropped from the saddle.

"I reckon that feller won't take any more paleface prisoners, or any other kind," observed Cheyenne Charlie, who had been watching.

"Not in this world, anyhow," answered Dart, who had also been noting what was taking place.

As the slain chief had been the leader of the pursuing party, it was quite natural that the redskins came to a temporary halt as he fell.

"That is the last of them for to-day," said Wild. "Come on, boys!"

Away went the band of cowboys after Young Wild West and his two brave partners.

It was no longer a race now.

The redskins were left far behind, and half an hour later they could no longer be seen.

But our friends kept riding along the trail over the waste of sand.

In an hour more they came upon Josh Dimple and Katy.

Ned Nelson was the first to greet them.

"It's all right," he said. "Young Wild West got away from ther blamed redskins! Cheyenne Charlie an' Jim Dart saved him an' ther Arizona Athlete, an' ther rest of us come along jest in time ter help 'em drive ther redskins back. It wasn't so much of a fight, either. Not one of us got teched by a bullet."

The horses were brought down to an easy gait, so as to not leave the pack-mules behind, and in this way they finally got over the desert.

"Now we're over ther line in Utah once more!" exclaimed Josh Dimple. "I'm right glad, too! In a few minutes we'll be in sight of Kanab."

The words were scarcely out of the old man's mouth when the pounding of horses' hoofs was heard.

The next minute a division of cavalry came in sight.

Riding ahead with one of the officers was Bill, the cowboy who had been sent after them.

When they came up to the party the cavalymen halted.

Wild at once sought out the colonel and reported.

When that official looked at his credentials he was very civil to the young deadshot.

"So, Young Wild West, you were captured by the redskins we are searching for, eh?" he said, twisting his long mustache and looking keenly at the young scout.

"Yes, colonel," was the reply. "But how long have you been looking for the redskins?"

"Oh, about five days now."

"Well, I must say that you have not looked very hard, then."

The officer knitted his brows.

"What do you mean?" he queried.

"Well, I mean that the main camp of the rebeling Moquis is located within thirty-two miles of this spot, and has been there for several days, if I am any judge of things in general. You should have settled the hash of the rascals long before this."

"See here, Young Wild West, I want no insinuations from you; I want you to understand that!"

"I generally speak what I think, colonel. If I have hurt your feelings I am sorry. But never mind! You just ride across the desert with your men, and when it gets dark you can surprise the redskins and make them surrender in no time, I think. You have nearly as many men as they have, and you can eat them up if it comes to a fight."

"Well, I guess you had better lead us to that camp; then we will be sure to find it."

This was spoken in a sarcastic tone of voice.

"That is not my business, colonel. I agreed to come here with my partners to locate the redskins for you. I have done so. Now you go ahead and attend to them. It is not my fault that I succeeded in locating them before I reported to you."

The colonel twisted his mustache more than ever.

It was quite evident that he did not like to be talked to in that way before his subordinates.

But at the same time, he knew he had no jurisdiction over Young Wild West, who only acted as a scout of his own free will, and was not an enlisted man.

The fact was that Wild had been so successful in helping the army out during the several outbreaks among the Indians in the past three years that his services were much sought after.

Cheyenne Charlie had served three years before he became acquainted with our hero, and since that time he had refused to re-enlist.

The colonel was not going to let what he called an insult to his dignity as a commanding officer of the army to go by, however.

"So you don't propose to lead us to the locality where the rebeling Moquis are camped, then?" he asked, in a severe tone of voice.

"No. I have told you where they are. All you will have to do is to follow the trail over the desert, and thence to



the woods you will see right before you. The camp is located about a mile and a half from the ford of the creek you will come to. If you choose to go all the way to the ford you can't miss it by turning off to the left and following the creek. The chances are that you will have a column of smoke to lead you direct to it."

"Well, I don't propose to do it, colonel. I have ended my obligations by reporting to you what I have learned."

"How do I know that you are telling the truth?"

"You have seen my credentials."

"Yes, I believe you are Young Wild West all right. But it might be that you are telling an untruth."

Wild bit his lips to keep back his anger.

He did not like to be talked to in that way.

"I guess you must judge me by yourself," he said, coolly.

"What!" roared the officer. "Do you mean to insinuate that I am a liar?"

"Well, if you say that you don't believe I have told you the truth you are one!"

At this the colonel drew his sword.

He had completely lost his temper.

Raising the weapon, he struck at the boy's face with the flat of the blade.

Wild stepped aside and avoided the blow.

"Look out for yourself, colonel!" he exclaimed. "I want you to understand that I will allow no man to strike me! I would not allow the commander-in-chief of the army to do it if I was not deserving of it. Just remember that I can report you and make trouble for you on account of the way you are acting."

"You can, eh? You low hound! I'll——"

That was as far as the irate officer got.

Young Wild West leaped forward like a shot and planted a blow between his insulter's eyes that made him see stars, and which sent him staggering against his horse.

"Seize the young dog!" bellowed the colonel.

Instantly Wild was surrounded by half a dozen cavalrymen.

He knew it would be useless to make any resistance, so he allowed them to take hold of him.

The soldiers waited to hear what the next words of the commanding officer would be.

Much to their surprise he said:

"Let him go! His credentials will not permit me to arrest him."

"Ah! I am glad you changed your mind so quickly, colonel," said Wild, smiling at him. "Now it will be in order for you to apologize."

"I will not apologize. Report me if you like."

"Well, I won't do that. But I think you will change your mind. I will wait at Kanab till you come back, and then we will see about it."

"Do you mean to threaten me, Young Wild West?"

"Oh, no; I don't threaten you. But I will thrash you when you get back to Kanab if you don't apologize."

If ever there was a mad officer of the army it was that colonel.

Yet he dared not do anything.

Wild was not under his jurisdiction, but had a document which gave him the privilege of going and coming at will among the various army posts, and even giving him the permission to advise the commanding officers.

The colonel had read this carefully.

There was nothing for him to do but to swallow his wrath and go on.

"I guess I'll have another duel to fight when I get through with you, Gilpin," said Wild, as they rode on toward Kanab.

"You are the greatest fellow I ever met, Young Wild West!" replied the Arizona Athlete.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE ARIZONA ATHLETE LOSES AGAIN, BUT FINDS A BACKER.

It was near nightfall when Young Wild West and his party rode into the little town called Kanab.

They were pretty well tired out from the exciting events of the day and the journey over the hot sands.

The Arizona Athlete was without a dollar to his name, since the Indians had taken all he had.

Before leaving the troopers, however, he had informed them of the amount the old chief had taken from him, and he had been promised the money back if they succeeded in getting the chief, alive or dead.

The cowboys had cooking utensils with them, and plenty of blankets, so when they went into camp Gilpin said he would rough it along with them.

Wild and his partners accepted the invitation of Josh Dimple to remain at his house while they stayed in the town.

It was a roomy structure built of logs, for the most part, and was at the outskirts.

They did not go out to look around the town that night, but took it easy until a little after nine, and then turned in.

They were up shortly after sunrise the next morning, however, and ready for business.

"We have got to remain here until the troopers come back," said our hero. "That colonel did not sign a paper to the effect that I had done duty as a scout. I forgot all about it until some time after we parted company with them."

"I reckon you'll have a time gittin' him to sign a paper," observed Josh Dimple, who was busy kindling a fire, so his daughter could get breakfast ready.

"Oh, I guess he will be perfectly willing to sign the paper, so we can get a voucher from the government," Wild replied. "He won't be in such an ugly humor when he gets back here."



"I thought it was goin' ter go putty hard with yer when he ordered yer ter be placed under arrest."

"Well, I didn't. I knew he was exceeding his authority. I am on an equal footing with him in military matters, and he had no right to talk as he did, and he knew it. He has been neglecting his duty by staying here, when he should have had scouts out searching for the redskins. It is easily proved that he did not try to find them by the fact that they were only a trifle over thirty miles from here, and he was not aware of it."

"Well, I reckon you made ther colonel sick, anyhow. It done me good, 'cause he seemed to be so important like."

After breakfast our friends concluded to ride over to the heart of the town, where there was a store and tavern, besides the other places that belonged to a town of its size.

Cheyenne Charlie complained of his stomach being a little out of order, so they headed for the tavern.

Dismounting in front of it, they found quite a crowd collected there.

The center of attraction was no less a person than the Arizona Athlete.

He was stripped to the waist, talking to the men gathered about, while near him stood Jumping Joe, the leader of the cowboys, a bag in his hand.

"Yes, gentlemen," Gilpin was saying, "I am known as the Arizona Athlete. I can box, run, jump, shoot, wrestle as anyone living. I beat all comers down at Prescott, and since I was robbed by the Indians and haven't a dollar to my name, I will give a little exhibition here and have my man pass the hat. If you feel like helping a fellow out, all right; if not it is all the same. Joe, get out the boxing gloves and strip for a bout."

"All right," answered Joe, and he dumped the gloves from the bag he held in his hand.

The gloves had been taken from the stage-coach when they left it, and the Arizona Athlete looked with pride at them.

As yet he had not seen Wild and his partners, and they did not go any nearer just then.

Wild did not want to disturb him in the least.

And they were anxious to see what sort of a performance he was going to give.

Jumping Joe stripped to the waist, and put on a pair of the gloves.

They were the big, soft kind, so little damage could be done with them.

Jumping Joe looked very awkward as he stepped to the center of the human ring, but Gilpin showed up to good advantage.

"Now, then, gentlemen," the Arizona Athlete said, "I am going to let this man try his best to hit me in the face, but he won't do it, simply because I won't let him. I don't know whether there is any one among you who knows anything about the art of boxing or not, but if there is he is invited to step up and try me as soon as the exhibition is over."

Then he selected the keeper of the tavern to act as ref-

eree, and at the word they shook hands and then started in.

Jumping Joe was very slow and awkward, and he could not land a blow, though it was plain that he was trying to.

On the other hand, Gilpin hit him whenever and wherever he pleased.

But he only struck him lightly.

"Hit me right on the end of the nose, Joe," he said, laughingly.

Joe tried to, but only hit the empty air.

"Ah! You can't do it, eh? Well, I am going to tap your nose, so look out for me!"

The cowboy held up his arms to guard against it, but a quick feint for the stomach brought them down in a hurry, and then he was tapped twice in rapid succession on the end of his nose just hard enough to fetch the blood.

Joe got a little mad then, and there was some fierce swinging on his part.

But so easily did the Arizona Athlete ward off the blows that a shout of applause went up from the lookers-on.

They liked the style of the man.

They kept at it for six or seven minutes, and then Jumping Joe gave it up.

He was glad to, no doubt.

"Pass the hat, Joe!" said Gilpin.

The cowboy picked up his hat and went around with it.

The men standing around were quite generous, and not one refused to put something in the hat.

When Jumping Joe came upon Wild and his partners at the outskirts of the crowd he evinced great surprise.

They all tossed some money in the hat.

"I am glad to see that the Arizona Athlete is trying to earn something," said our hero. "It shows that he is not ashamed to work, anyhow."

"Oh, Gus ain't afraid ter work," retorted the cowboy. "But I don't like ter be a punchin' bag fur him, even if them gloves is soft. I jest wish I could handle myself like you kin, Young Wild West! If I could I'd sorter s'prise ther Arizony Athlete, I reckon."

"Well, don't you tell him we are here, and then perhaps he will invite someone in the crowd to come up and put the gloves on. I don't know much about boxing gloves, but I do know a little about handling my fists. I guess I could give him a rough time of it for a little while, and he would not get off as easy as he did with you."

The cowboy finished going around with the hat and dumped about thirty dollars in the hands of Gilpin as a result.

Times were pretty good in Kanab, and the men were not afraid to give up their money.

The silver mines in the near vicinity were yielding plentifully, and everyone who wanted work could get it.

Gilpin had no sooner placed the money in his pockets than he stepped out and put on a pair of the gloves again.

"Isn't there anyone who wants to try a round or two?"



he asked. "I assure you, gentlemen, that I will not hurt you. Why, these gloves are as soft as feather pillows."

"I'll put them on with you!"

It was Young Wild West who spoke.

The Arizona Athlete recognized the voice instantly.

"All right, Young Wild West," he answered, shrugging his shoulders. "You can have a go at me. We will call this one of the phases of the duel that is to last a week."

"Good!" exclaimed Wild. "I guess I can handle you with the gloves on. One thing, I won't be apt to put you to sleep, like I did with my bare fists."

"I doubt if you can hit me in a spot that would put me to sleep. You see, I know your tactics pretty well by this time, and I'll be on the watch for you."

This talk was puzzling to the crowd.

"You had better tell them what is up," Wild said, nodding at the men standing about.

"Boys," said the Arizona Athlete, "I may as well tell you that Young Wild West is the toughest proposition I ever struck in athletics. I——"

"Hold on!" interrupted a voice. "Jest tell us that over again, will yer? What was it yer said—ther toughest what?"

"The toughest proposition I ever struck in athletics," repeated Gilpin.

"What's athletics?"

"Why—er—it means anything in the line of sport that requires muscle and endurance—running, jumping, boxing, wrestling, or anything like that."

"Oh!"

The questioner looked relieved, as did the majority in the crowd.

Athletics was a new word for them.

"Young Wild West and I had some trouble when we first met yesterday, and we started to fight with our fists. We did not finish the fight on account of a band of Moqui Indians appearing just then. Then we had a go with revolvers and he got the best of me. Later we had a fist fight and he knocked me senseless. I told him I would beat him at something if it took a week to do it. We have started an athletic duel that is to last a week, and I am glad that Young Wild West has offered to give me a go with the gloves. I did not expect he would, since he bested me in a real fight."

"Oh, I am only too glad to put on the boxing gloves with you," Wild answered. "You see, I am always trying to learn something. I don't know anything about fighting with my hands covered by these soft things, but I guess I will manage to handle them."

There came a cheer from several in the crowd at this.

The lithe, athletic form of our hero could but attract admiration.

Jim Dart stepped up and tied on the gloves for Wild. Then the contestants shook hands and started in.

It was a different exhibition from what the crowd had just witnessed.

Wild was as quick as lightning, and he simply had his man going from the start.

He was brimful of confidence, and that aided him.

Biff—biff—biff!

The padded gloves landed on the face and body of the Arizona Athlete relentlessly.

"These are fine things to knock a fellow around with, I think," said Wild, smiling at the crowd, as he sent his opponent to the ground. "You can't hurt him much, and you can't get hurt yourself."

There were no rounds to the exhibition.

Gus Gilpin tried his best for five minutes, and then gave it up.

"Young Wild West wins!" he called out, showing a face that was very red and puffed. "I will admit that he is too much for me, gentlemen."

A cheer that was almost deafening went up.

Then everyone wanted to shake hands with Wild.

It happened that many present had heard of him and his partners.

He took it all good-naturedly, and after it was over went inside the tavern with Charlie and Jim.

The scout got his drink of tanglefoot for his stomach's sake, as he put it, after which he declared that he felt as fine as a fiddle.

The Arizona Athlete offered to put on the gloves with any of the rest of the crowd, but no one felt like accepting the invitation.

The men were not boxers, and they did not claim to be.

The episode was the talk of the town.

But Gilpin did not challenge Wild to anything further that day.

He found a resident of the town who sympathized with him.

He was a wealthy mine owner named Greggs.

There are some people who will take a dislike to a fellow just because he shows himself to be an expert in some particular line.

That was the way it was with Greggs.

Young Wild West was "too smart," he said.

He sought out Gilpin and asked him what was his best game at athletics.

"Wrestling," was the reply, "but I think I could beat him at running a hundred yards, or making a high jump."

"All right. You practice up them three things an' I'll back you," was the reply.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE DUEL DRAWS TO A FINISH.

Young Wild West and his partners took things very easy for the next four days.

Wild had heard nothing further from the Arizona Ath-



lete in regard to the duel they were fighting in such a peculiar way, nor had the cavalymen got back from their hunt for the redskins.

But that night the cavalry got back.

It was so late that Wild did not bother to go out and see the colonel.

But the next morning he made for the army post, accompanied by his partners and Josh Dimple.

The old hunter was very anxious to see how Wild would make out with the dignified official of the army.

Our hero meant business.

There were two things that he required of the colonel.

One was an apology for what had transpired when he reported a few days before, and the other was his signature to the document he carried.

The news had spread that the Indians had surrendered after a short fight, and had been taken back to the reservation as prisoners.

That ended the Indian uprising, all right.

When our friends got to the quarters they found that the colonel had not yet shown up for his breakfast.

It was past nine, but Wild was willing to wait.

He left his name and then walked away from the spot, followed by his companions.

It was then that Greggs, the mine owner, appeared.

"I've got a challenge for you, Young Wild West," he said, touching our hero on the shoulder.

"Oh, is that so?" was the retort. "Who is it from?"

"From the Arizona Athlete. As this is the last day of the week, and he promised to beat you in the deal before it was over, he wants to meet you this morning at 'leven o'clock in a jumping, running, and wrestling contest."

"All right. Tell him I will be on hand."

"He is willing to bet five hundred dollars that he wins two out of the three events."

"I'll take ther bet!" exclaimed Cheyenne Charlie, who was ever ready to back his dashing young partner.

"Very well; we will go over to the tavern and put up the money."

They followed Greggs over to the tavern, and on the way he told them who and what he was with no little importance.

"Did Gilpin get the money that the redskins took from him?" Wild asked.

"Not yet. But I heard that the colonel has it for him."

"Then he has some for me, too."

"I suppose so."

"Where did Gilpin get the five hundred to make the bet?"

"Oh, he has friends here in town."

"You are one of them, I presume?"

"Yes; I don't mind telling you that I am."

Well, I haven't anything against Gilpin. He is mad because he could not whip me, that's all. He will be better satisfied when this duel of ours is over, I think. I don't mean to let him win a single point in it."

"You don't, eh? Ha, ha, ha!"

The mine owner laughed, as though it was a good joke. They soon reached the hotel, and then Charlie put up his money, which was promptly covered by Greggs.

The terms of the wager were made known to the keeper of the tavern, who was made the stakeholder, and then our friends went back to the colonel's quarters.

He had just got up, and was outside his tent.

A scowl came over his brow as he saw Young Wild West.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"I want you to sign a paper to the effect that I located the rebeling Moquis and reported the same to you," was the calm reply.

The colonel signed the paper and handed it over.

"Now," said Wild, "I don't want to have any ill-feelings between us, so you can hand over the money that was taken from me by Running Elk the other day. Then we will part on good terms, as far as I am concerned."

The colonel plainly did not like this sort of talk.

"You can't have your money until you have made out a claim and sworn to it," he answered. "And as for me apologizing to you, that is out of the question. A colonel of the army does not have to lower himself to apologize to a mere scout."

"He does not, eh? Well, you will either have to do it or take a thrashing! I will put that in my report to your superiors, too!"

"You want to make it an affair of honor, do you?"

"It is an affair of honor now. You called me a vile name, and if you are a man you will apologize, since you know you should not have acted the way you did."

"I am man enough to meet you and fight you, Young Wild West."

"All right. That just suits me. But remember, you will have to apologize in the end. You can save yourself a whole lot of humiliation by doing it now perhaps."

"I'll meet you at one o'clock to-day in the woods at the outskirts of the town. I will send an orderly to you to make arrangements. You have the choice of weapons, of course. My honor is at stake, and I must uphold it."

"All right, colonel."

Wild walked away smilingly.

"Well, I reckon you've got enough on hand for one day, Wild," said Cheyenne Charlie, as they went back to the Dimple house.

"Yes, and I will pull out of it all a winner, see if I don't!" was the reply.

Once at the house Wild began cleaning his weapons and getting ready to finish the queer duel with the Arizona Athlete.

The duel with the colonel would take place two hours later, but that was an after-consideration.

The out-door life he was leading kept our hero in good training all the time.

He could run like a deer, so he feared nothing on that score.

Jumping was a thing that he seldom did for the sake of seeing how far he could go.



He tried a few times, and Charlie and Jim declared that if Gilpin would beat him he would have to be up and stirring.

Wild practiced both broad and high jumping, and was perfectly satisfied with what he did.

A little before eleven all hands, including Katy Dimple, went over to the open space in front of the tavern.

It was here where the contests were to take place.

Greggs had taken pains to let the whole town know what was on the carpet, and there was about half of the population there when our friends arrived.

Gilpin sat on the stoop of the tavern, a big robe about his athletic form.

He had got himself in what he called fine form.

He stepped out and shook hands with Wild.

"Young Wild West," he said, "this is the last day I have to make good my claim. When we get through with the running, jumping, and wrestling the duel will have been ended. Then I will be satisfied. I want you to thoroughly understand that there will be no animosity on my part after it is over, either."

It was then talked over, and decided that the running contest should take place first.

Promptly at eleven the two were ready.

As nearly every man, woman, and child in the town knew the circumstances of the queer duel that was to be finished that morning, there was the greatest of interest manifested.

The race was to be a hundred yards, and when it was measured off Wild and Gilpin toed the scratch.

The Arizona Athlete had on a running suit, but our hero was content to appear in his blue shirt and buckskin breeches.

The tavern keeper had been appointed starter, and when he raised his revolver over his head and asked if they were ready both answered in the affirmative.

Crack!

As the report sounded they bounded away side by side. Then it was that Wild found that he had a real runner to contend with.

But as he had beaten some of the swiftest Indian runners he did not fear the outcome.

"Go it, Wild!" yelled Cheyenne Charlie.

But the boy did not need the injunction.

When about half the distance had been covered he put on a mighty effort and left his opponent behind.

A shout went up as he crossed the finish line a good two yards in the lead.

"You are beaten again, Gilpin," he said, as they trotted back side by side.

You beat anything I ever saw, Young Wild West!" was the reply. "You could go East and make a fortune."

"No, thank you! I'd rather stay in the wilds of the West; that is the proper place for me."

With the cheers ringing in his ears, our hero put on his coat and went inside the tavern.

The stoop was crowded with troopers, and when he got inside he found the colonel there taking a drink.

They did not deign to speak to each other, Wild because he felt that it was not his business to address the man, and the colonel because he really felt that the boy was beneath his notice.

Ten minutes later the contestants were called out to jump.

As he was walking over to the scratch line Jumping Joe approached our hero and whispered:

"I kin beat him at this game myself, so you won't have no trouble in doin' it."

"You can't tell about that," was the reply.

"Well, I've jest bet ten dollars with a soldier that you'll win."

"All right. I'll try to, anyhow."

There were three jumps to be made by each, a running broad jump, a standing broad jump, and a standing high jump.

Wild won the first by five inches.

The second he won by over six, and the high jump by two.

It was very easy for him, too.

The Arizona Athlete was pretty well disheartened.

But he still had a chance to win the wrestling bout, he thought.

That would let him down a little easy, in case he did.

Greggs was a very mad man.

He was disgusted with his protegee, but did not object to the tavern keeper turning the bet over to Charlie.

Gilpin was anxious to end the duel.

He got ready in a hurry.

"Come on, Young Wild West!" he exclaimed. "Let's get the thing over with."

"Are you really a good wrestler?" Wild asked, as he stepped out to meet him.

"Yes," was the reply. "What do you say if we go down on the river bank? The ground is level and softer there."

"All right. Anything suits me."

Only those standing close to them heard what was being said, and when the two turned and walked from the spot some one gave it out that the wrestling had been called off.

A fight started between a drunken cowboy and a soldier just then, and the crowd stayed there.

Charlie, Jim, Jumping Joe, and Greggs were the only ones who followed the principals down to the river.

"Let's get at it!" exclaimed the defeated athlete.

"All right. Are you ready?"

"Yes."

They were locked together in a jiffy.

"Hold on!" called out Greggs, who had made another bet with the scout. "Hadn't you better let someone give the word?"

The wrestlers let go of each other.

"You can do it if you like," said Wild.



"All right. Go!"

At the word the two grappled.

## CHAPTER XII.

### CONCLUSION.

Since the Arizona Athlete was so anxious to have it over with, Wild thought he might as well put him on his back as quickly as possible.

No rules had been laid down, so he suddenly hooked his right heel behind his opponent's left leg and tripped him.

Down went Gilpin easily.

"First fall for Wild!" sang out Cheyenne Charlie.

By this time the crowd was hastening that way.

The river bank was lined when they got ready for the second trial.

"I will let you get your favorite hold this time, Gilpin," Wild said. "I don't think you have any show, but I want to be perfectly fair with you."

"I don't want any favors," was the reply. "Let's run in for holds this time."

"Very well!"

They stepped apart to a distance of about twelve feet, and then Greggs gave the word.

As they came together Wild caught his man by the thigh with his left hand, while he twined his right arm about his neck.

Then, using his knee as a fulcrum, he sent the Arizona Athlete flying over his head.

He landed on his hands and knees, but Wild quickly pounced upon him and put his shoulders on the ground.

It all happened so quickly that few saw exactly how it had been done.

But there was a ringing cheer just the same.

That ended the duel.

Gilpin got up and put out his hand.

"Shake!" he said.

Wild obliged him.

"We are good friends, I hope, Young Wild West?"

"Oh, yes! I haven't the least thing against you, Gilpin."

"Good! I have learned considerable since I met you."

They walked side by side back to the tavern.

Greggs was the only sore one in the crowd.

Wild and his partners went back to the house of the Dimples.

Dinner was waiting them, though it was scarcely twelve.

Katy had hurried home from the scene of the jumping match, after a mysterious talk with Ned Nelson, her lover.

"What was your hurry about ther dinner, Katy?" her father asked her.

"Well, pop, me an' Ned has decided to git married this afternoon after Young Wild West settles his trouble with the colonel."

"Git married?" echoed Dimple.

"Why, yes! As if you never thought I was goin' to marry Ned, pop!"

"Well, I did think you was going ter marry him, but not ter-day."

"Well, there's been so much goin' on to-day that we thought we might as well finish up things by gittin' married. So there!"

"Oh, that settles it, I know," said the old man, with a grin. "Go ahead, is all I say! I reckon we made putty good out of ther pelts we got over in Arizona. I kin afford ter put up a treat fur ther gang. Have yer sent out ther invitations yet?"

"Ned is goin' around invitin' them we want now."

Wild and his partners were pleased to know that they were going to attend a wedding before they left Kanab.

"How are you goin' to fight ther colonel, Wild?" Charlie asked, as the hour of one gradually drew nearer.

"Well, I hadn't made up my mind, but I think I'll choose the weapons that Nature has provided us with."

"Do you think he will want to fight with fists?"

"He will have to, that's all."

"You don't want to kill him, anyhow," spoke up Jim.

"No. If I should choose revolvers I might have to."

Well, give him a good thrashing and make him apologize."

"I certainly will if it lies in me to do it."

Just then an orderly came over.

It was the first Wild had seen of anyone from the colonel, though he had promised to send someone over to make arrangements right after their meeting that morning.

"The colonel says if you are willing to let the matter drop, he is," said the orderly.

"I am not willing, tell him," replied the boy. "He has got to apologize or fight. He challenged me, and I will choose the weapons."

"What weapons do you choose, then. The colonel certainly will not apologize."

"Bare fists."

"What!"

"That's right. We will fight with our fists."

But that will not be fighting a duel."

"Yes, it will. You tell him that if he fails to meet me at the appointed time, which is in less than half an hour from now, I will thrash him within an inch of his life the first time I meet him. And also that I will report the whole affair to his superiors. I don't like to make threats, but I can't help it in this case. It is the only way I can deal with him, it seems."

The orderly hastened off, and in a few minutes came back.

"He will meet you over by that big oak," he said, pointing out the tree. "But you must only have two persons with you."

"All right. I agree to that."



Wild nodded to Charlie and Jim, and the three set out for the tree.

They reached the tree and waited.

It was just one o'clock when the colonel appeared alone.

"Where are your seconds, colonel?" Wild asked.

"I need no seconds," was the reply.

"Oh, you don't, eh?"

"No. I have not come to fight, but to apologize."

"Is that a fact? Well, I'm surprised."

"I have thought over the matter, and will admit that I was in the wrong."

"Good."

"So if you will call it all off I will say that I am very sorry for what I have called you."

"All right. In that case we will call it off."

"I humbly beg your pardon, Young Wild West! And I hope you will not mention anything that has occurred to my superiors."

"I will not. Good-day, colonel."

"Good-day!"

The military commander walked away just as stiffly as ever.

But he felt rather humble, just the same.

"I guess that ends it," remarked our hero. "Now, then, I will make out the claim for the money the Indian chief took from me, and when I get it that will settle our business here in Kanab."

They went back to the house, and then Wild told the Dimples what had taken place.

Katy and her father and brother were hustling to get some good things ready for the wedding feast, now that it was settled that it was to take place so soon.

Our friends saw that they could not be of any use to them, so after learning that the ceremony was to be performed at half-past four, and that a feast and dance was to follow, they mounted their horses and started for a ride through the town.

There was nothing new to be seen, and becoming tired of the cheering he got from all parts of the town, our hero finally dismounted in front of the tavern.

Charlie and Jim followed him inside.

They found that the Arizona Athlete had already received his money from the colonel, and that he had taken up his quarters at the tavern. Greggs was there also.

Greggs had heard about Wild's wonderful shooting, so he asked him to go out and give a short exhibition.

Of course, the young deadshot was willing to do this.

He prided himself on his marksmanship more than anything else, and he was ever ready to shoot.

Greggs gave it out that Young Wild West was going to do some fancy shooting, and they were followed outside by a crowd of men.

Charlie was just lighting a cigar at the time, so our hero concluded to show them how he could knock the ash from a cigar in a man's mouth.

"Puff up a little, Charlie," he said.

The scout knew what was wanted, so he was not long in getting an inch ash on the end of the cigar.

"Now stand over there by that tree."

Charlie was no more afraid to do it than he was to go to bed.

He had confidence in the dashing young marksman.

The distance was a good thirty feet—surely a long shot for a revolver at such a small target.

But that made no difference to Wild.

When he saw that Charlie was ready he said not a word, but raising his Colt's six-shooter, fired.

The ash was cut from the cigar as clean as a whistle, and the bullet lodged in the tree.

A wild cheering followed the shot, and when it had subsided the boy gave them a further exhibition.

It is needless to say that he made a very favorable impression on the men of Kanab.

Four o'clock our friends went back to the Dimple house.

The wedding guests were already beginning to arrive.

When the hour came for the knot to be tied there were about thirty young men and women there.

A minister and a fiddler were very much in evidence, too.

These two could scarcely be got along without.

The ceremony was duly performed, and the wedding feast followed.

Then Wild was called upon to say something.

He talked to them about five minutes, giving out a whole lot of good advice along with the pleasant things he had to say about the bride and groom, and after he was through the dancing began.

It was a royal good time that followed.

This about ends our story.

The next day Wild got his money from the colonel, who insisted on shaking hands with him.

Then our friends set out for Denver, where they were to meet some friends.

The Arizona Athlete bade them good-by, along with the rest of the friends they had made, and the Duel that Lasted a Week was forgotten.

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